The SHAMEFUL SIN, *with the exceeding Sinfulneſs, and evil Effects of it.*

BEING

Cautions againſt WHORING;

Directions about MARRYING;

WITH THE

Duties and Advantages of a Married State; and thoſe alſo of a Single Life.

AND SOME

COUNSEL concerning Children, and Youth, and their Education:

AND THE

Way of Placing them out, and Settling them well in the World.

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8/4

THE

PREFACE.

IN theſe laſt Days, and in this ſinful Nation of ours, wherein Iniquity does ſo much abound, it is no Wonder, that the main Principles of Reaſon and Religion are cavil'd at, and ſpoken againſt; and, among the reſt, that of Marriage, and of a

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regular Courſe of Life: And that the contrary Principles of Libertiniſm, of Whoredom, and Adultery, and the like, are ſo much practis'd, and pleaded for. The Thoughts of which have made me preſume, that it might be ſeaſonable, and perhaps might be uſeful to ſome, to publiſh the following Diſcourſes upon thoſe Subjects. The two firſt of which were preach'd almoſt twenty Years ago, upon the Occaſion of two Perſons, in a neighbouring Pariſh, doing Penance in our Church: The Man had been long married,

ried, and had a Wife then alive, when the Maid-Servant in the Houſe was big with Child by him; the Wife ſoon after died, whereupon he married the other: But they have been both long ſince dead, which makes it the more adviſable, or allowable, to publiſh that Sermon, now divided into two, preach'd to them at that Time. The other Sermons were preach'd upon the like Occaſion, above twenty Years ſince, to two young Perſons, who had been alſo criminal that Way, before their Marriage: They alſo have been

both dead ſome Years ago. If the Publiſhing of theſe plain Sermons may contribute any Thing toward the Suppreſſing of ſuch a ſhameful, reigning Vice, or the breaking of any one Perſon off it, or to deter any others from it; I ſhall think my weak Endeavours well beſtow'd. However, I pray God to incline the Hearts of the Magiſtrates to put the Laws in Execution againſt ſuch crying Sins, as are enough to bring down God's Judgments upon us; and even to make this War prove very calamitous to us. Which

I pray God we may prevent, by every one of us, from the Higheſt to the Loweſt, ſetting ourſelves ſeriouſly to repent, and to break off our Sins, and amend our Lives; that we may be a People fit to be favour'd, and protected, and bleſſed of Almighty God. Amen.

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Secondly, By frequently bringing them, by the Means of their Sins, into many Troubles, and Straits; and ſometimes to extreme Poverty, even to be fit to want Bread. And,

Thirdly, By making their fooliſh and hurtful Luſts, of Whoredom and Adultery, bring upon them many Pains, Infirmities, and Diſeaſes; and ſometimes a miſerable untimely Death.

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SERMON I.

Cautions againſt Whoring.

2 COR. vii. 9.

Now I rejoice, not that ye were made ſorry, but that ye ſorrowed to Repentance: For ye were made ſorry after a godly Manner.

IN the Verſe before the Text the Apoſtle ſays, that he had written a Letter to theſe People, which he perceiv'd had made them ſorry, which, he ſays, he was not ſorry for, but rather glad of; becauſe, he hoped, it was for their Good; that their *Sorrow was*

SERM. I.

SERM. I. *in the Way of Repentance, and in a godly Manner*; which would make much towards their Salvation.

Now the *Letter*, with the Occaſion of it, we have in the *fifth Chapter of the firſt Epiſtle to the* Corinthians; wherein the Apoſtle tells them, that he heard, that there had been *Fornication among them*, and that, of an extraordinary Nature; and yet, that they had made light of it; or, however, *had not mourned*, nor been ſufficiently concern'd about it; nor had taken any Notice, or Puniſhment, of the Man, that had done it; and for which he there ſharply rebukes them, and adviſes them, by all Means, *to put away the Man from among them*; that is, either to excommunicate him, or to take ſome ſuch Courſe with him, as to make him ſenſible, and ſorrowful for what he had done; even to *deliver him over to Satan*, ſome Way or other to puniſh him; to humble, and abaſe, and afflict him in the Body, or outward Eſtate; ſo as that the Luſts, and Deſires of the Fleſh might be mortify'd, and the Body of Sin might be dead, or deſtroy'd

deſtroy'd in him; and that he might be reform'd, and renew'd in the inward Man; that ſo, *his Spirit might be ſav'd in the Day of the Lord Jeſus.* SERM. I.

This ſeems to be the Meaning, and the Subſtance, of that *Letter of the Apoſtle's, in the fifth Chapter of the firſt Epiſtle to the* Corinthians, and which ſeems to have had a good Effect upon the Man, that had committed the Fornication; for it brought him to *Repentance*, and a *godly Sorrow* for his Sin; and alſo upon them all, ſo far as they were concern'd about it, by conniving, and allowing him in it; in not puniſhing him for it, or turning him out of their ſolemn Aſſemblies; and thereby making him an Example, and a Warning to all others, not to do the like: In neglecting of which, they were thereby made ſenſible, that they had done amiſs, and were ſorry for it. All which Good coming of that Epiſtle of the Apoſtle's, he ſays, that he was not ſorry, or did not repent, but rather rejoice, that he had written ſo to them. For ſays he, in the Verſe before the Text, *Tho' I made you ſorry with*

SERM. I. *a Letter, I do not repent, tho' I did repent; for, I perceive, that the ſame Epiſtle made you ſorry, tho' it was but for a Seaſon. Yea,* ſays he in the Text, *now I rejoice, not that ye were made ſorry, but that ye ſorrowed to Repentance; for ye were made ſorry after a godly Manner.*

This was the good End of the Care, and Counſel, of the Apoſtle in this Matter. And this is the good End of the Teaching, and Preaching, of all Miniſters, to warn, and turn People from their Sins. This is the good End of all friendly Admonitions, and Rebukes, to let our Friends ſee their Errors, and the Evil of their Ways, that they may repent, and turn from them. This is the good End of all fatherly Counſels, and Corrections, to make their Children know, when they do amiſs; that they may do ſo no more. And, finally, this is the good End of all Penalties, and Puniſhments, whether of Church or State, to make People aſham'd, and ſorry, for any Evil that they have done; and to keep them, and all others, from afterwards doing the ſame.

And

SERM. I.

And this is the good End of this Cenſure, or Shame, laid upon theſe two Perſons, who are order'd to appear here as Criminals, or rather as Penitents; or in order to bring them to *Repentance*, and to *a godly Sorrow*, for the heinous Crime committed by them.

And, indeed, unleſs it have this good Effect upon you, in vain is this Order made for you. For it ſignifies little, or nothing, your appearing here, and *confeſſing your Fault, unleſs you do it from the Heart, and ſorrow for it after a godly Sort.* It may indeed ſatisfy the Law, and clear you of the Court, and may alſo afford ſome Satisfaction to your Neighbours, for the great Scandal, and Offence, that you have given them, by your ſhameful Act; but if you would likewiſe be reconciled unto God, and do yourſelves any Good, then you muſt, according to the Example of theſe Penitents in the Text, you muſt *ſorrow to Repentance, or be made ſorry after a godly Manner.* To bring you to which,

SERM. I. will be the chief Deſign of my following Diſcourſe.

For as you are order'd to do Penance in this, as well as in your own Pariſh-Church, I thought it my Duty, out of Reſpect to the Congregation, and out of Kindneſs to you, to draw up a little Advice for you; both to admoniſh you of your Fault, and of the Heinouſneſs of it; and alſo to ſhew you, how much Need you have of Repentance, and how ſeriouſly you ought to do it, or, as the Text ſays, *after a godly Manner*, by conſidering, what a great Sin it is, which you committed together, *viz.* that of Fornication, or Adultery, which is one of the greateſt of all Sins.

Becauſe it breeds Abundance of Miſchief, and is attended with an heavy Load of Guilt, and with a great many grievous Circumſtances, ſome of which I ſhall now endeavour, as briefly and plainly as I can, to lay before you; in order to bring you to *Repentance, and to a godly Sorrow for the ſame.*

The

SERM. I.

The firſt grievous Circumſtance of your Fornication, or Adultery, and which, indeed, makes it to be the more heinous Sin, eſpecially on your Part,——is this; that when you committed it, you was a married Man, and had a Wife then alive, and this Woman a Servant to her. So that for you to do ſuch a wicked Thing, was perfectly contrary to one *great Deſign, and End of Marriage; which is to keep People honeſt, and chaſt; that thoſe, who have not the Gift of Continency, might marry.*

But if in this Reſpect alſo you did very imprudently, if not wickedly, in marrying the firſt Time ſo very diſagreeably: As there is nothing more unſeemly, and contrary to Nature, than for a Man, in the Flower of his Age, to marry a Woman well ſtricken in Years, as you did: And that, moſt likely, chiefly for filthy Lucre; or more for the Sake of her Subſtance, than for the Love of her Perſon: And if ſo, then you did very wrong at firſt; and thereby laid the Foundation of

SERM. I. this wicked Deed, which you ſince committed.

For it cannot be expected, that ſuch a Couple, as are unequally yok'd together, ſhould ever after ſo well love one another, and be ſo true to one another, as they ought to be. And therefore, how much ſoever, and what Way ſoever, you know yourſelf to have offended againſt this good End, and Deſign of Marriage; as, by marrying ſo ill at firſt, and behaving ſo ill in it ſince, eſpecially by this late notorious Fact; you ought ſeriouſly to repent of it, or, to be *ſorry for it after a godly Manner*.

Secondly, Another grievous Circumſtance of this Crime of yours is, that it was directly contrary to the ſolemn Vow, and Promiſe, which you made to your Wife, at your Marriage. For tho' you perhaps did not then mind it, or did not deſign to perform it; yet you did then promiſe to your Wife, as all other Men are bound to do at their Marriage; you did, I ſay, at your Marriage ſolemnly promiſe to your Wife, before God and the Congregation;

That

That you would honour, and comfort, and cheriſh her; and that you would love her, and none other beſides her, in the like Manner; or that forſaking all others you would keep your ſelf only to her, ſo long as ye both ſhould live. But you broke all this, when you was naught with this Woman, and kept her in the Houſe with you; not ſo much to be your Wife's Servant, as your own Harlot; or as one more beloved of you, than your Wife her ſelf. As there are uſually too many Proofs of it, in ſuch a Caſe. For when a Man keeps an Harlot in the ſame Houſe with his Wife; it is too common, that the Harlot does bear moſt Rule, and is moſt reſpected; as if ſhe was the Miſtreſs of the Houſe, or the Wife; while the poor injur'd Wife is often ſlighted, if not abuſed; as if ſhe was the Servant, or the Harlot. SERM. I.

Now, how much you were guilty in this Reſpect, I can't ſay; but it's to be fear'd that you did, like all other falſe and baſe Huſbands in ſuch a Caſe, *viz.* That the more you regarded the Harlot, the leſs you reſpected your Wife. Which, I ſay, was altogether

SERM. I. together contrary to your ſolemn Promiſe at Marriage, and to the very ſacred Inſtitution of Marriage itſelf; which forbids a Man loving any one ſo well as his Wife; no, not Father, or Mother, or any other, As God at the Beginning, when he made the firſt Man and Woman, and made them Man and Wife, ordain'd, that thus it ſhould be; that they two ſhould be but both as one. *And that a Man ſhould therefore leave his Father and Mother, and cleave unto his Wife; and that they ſhould be one Fleſh*, Gen. ii. 24.

Now, if an Huſband ought to love his Wife ſo well, even ſo much above all others, as to leave Father, and Mother for her; then he ought to be ſo honeſt and true to her, as never to leave her, and never to leave loving her; eſpecially, not for the Sake of an Harlot. Which is as great an Inſtance of Injuſtice, as a Man can be guilty of. For as it is a greater Crime in a Man, to do an Injury to his Wife, than to any other Perſon; becauſe he ought to love his Wife above all others, and therefore ought to be careful, above all others,

not to wrong his Wife; ſo the greateſt Wrong, that a Man can do to his Wife, is to rob her of his Love, and beſtow it upon an Harlot; which is ſuch an abominable Iniquity, as well deſerves to be puniſhed by the Judges; and that alſo in ſome high Degree, ſuitable to the Greatneſs of the Crime, and to that juſt Judgment ordain'd of God himſelf for *Adulterers, and Adultereſſes*, viz. *That the Man which committeth Adultery with his Neighbour's Wife; the Adulterer, and the Adultereſs, ſhall ſurely be put to death*, Lev. xx. 10. SERM. I.

This is the Law, which God made for his People of old, and moſt likely, for all People throughout all Generations; and no Reaſon can be given, why it ſhould not yet be ſtrictly obſerv'd as a Law in ours, and in all other Nations. And therefore it is to be hoped, that our * Lawgivers will take it

* I have been credibly inform'd, that Sir *Ambroſe Phillips* once brought a Bill into the Honourable Houſe of Commons, to puniſh Adulterers, and Adultereſſes, with Death; but, tho' the Members of that Houſe could not for Shame reject it; yet, ſome of them, being unwilling that it ſhould paſs, found out Means to drop it, or to delay

SERM. I. it into Conſideration, and enact it to be a Law in our Land; *That the Man, who committeth Adultery with another Man's Wife; even he, that committeth Adultery with his Neighbour's Wife, the Adulterer, and the Adultereſs, ſhall ſurely be put to Death; according to the Law of God.*

And tho' this be not altogether your Caſe; tho' you did not lie with another Man's Wife; yet, as you had a Wife of your own alive at that Time, for you to lie with another Woman, ſeems to be very near, if not altogether, as great a Crime. Becauſe, it is as great a Breach of the ſacred Inſtitution of Marriage; and as great a Breach of the Faith, and Love, due to your Wife; and as great a Breach of God's holy Commandment, for you, ſo long as your Wife did live, to lie with any other, tho' ſhe were not a married Woman.

For

delay the Reading of it the ſecond, or the third Time, till the Seſſion was over; and ſo, as Sir *Edward Seymour* complimented him upon it, they gave his good Bill a decent Burial. Which it is to be wiſh'd may be reviv'd, and paſs'd, and put in Execution; to the Puniſhing, and Preventing of ſuch an heinous Sin from reigning ſo much, as, is ſuppos'd, it does now in this grievouſly ſinful, and almoſt ſinking Nation.

SERM. I.

For tho' to lie with another Man's Wife, does indeed breed a great deal of Miſchief in the World, by injuring a Man in the tendereſt Part; not only by robbing him of the Love of his Wife, but alſo by bringing a baſtard Brood upon his Family: And accordingly was puniſhed by the Law of God with the greater temporal Puniſhment, even with Death, both to the Man, and to the Woman, that were guilty of the Adultery; yet as to the Sin, it ſeems to be much the ſame; for a Man, that has a Wife, to lie with another Woman; as for any one to lie with another Man's Wife. Becauſe it is as contrary to the moſt righteous Law of God, and to one good End, and Deſign of Marriage, *viz.* That the Huſband * ſhould be true to the Wife, and the Wife to the Huſband. And that they ſhould not only be faithful, but alſo ſo faſt knit together in Love, that they ſhould cleave to one another, as if they were both one. Eſpecially, it is directly contrary to the Goſpel of Chriſt; by which it

* Mal. ii. 14, 15. Prov. v. 18 ---- 21. *and* Prov. xii. 4. *and* Prov. ii. 16, 17.

SERM. I. it is injoin'd, and that for this very Purpoſe, or *to avoid Fornication*, that, *Every Man ſhould have his own Wife; and every Woman her own Huſband*, 1 Cor. vii. 2. And therefore, for a Man, that hath a Wife of his own, to be given to Fornication; to haunt Harlots Houſes, or to make an Harlot's Houſe of his own, is the greater Sin, in him; and not much inferiour, or unlike, the great Sin of Adultery.

And tho' in the Times of the Old Law, many Men had more Wives than one, or Concubines, which were inferiour Sort of Wives; yet the Law does no where ſeem to encourage it, but rather to condemn it; as a Thing that did greatly turn their Hearts from God, * and for which, God did often ſeverely puniſh them. Or tho' God did † ſuffer them, or bear with them much in that Thing, by reaſon of the Hardneſs of their Hearts; or did wink at that, and many other Things that were much amiſs among them, in thoſe ‡ Days of

* Deut. xvii. 17. Neh. xiii. 26. 1 Kings xi. 1 --- 10.
† Mark x. 2 --- 10. ‡ Acts xvii. 30.

of Ignorance, in compariſon of theſe bright Days of the Goſpel; yet this evil Practice, too common among the Gentiles, and from them among the Jews, can't be made a Plea for us Chriſtians. For whatever Liberty the Law might allow, or rather, whatever Liberty ſome Men under the Law might take, to have ſeveral Wives, or to keep Concubines; yet there is no ſuch Thing allowed by the Goſpel; no, not for ſingle Perſons, and much leſs for thoſe that are married, either the Wife or the Huſband, to be given to Adultery, or Fornication. For our Chriſtian Religion is a much more ſtrict, and pure, and perfect Religion; and does threaten much greater Penalties, than either bodily Pains, or temporal Death, even eternal Deſtruction, to all thoſe that are guilty of ſuch Sins; unleſs they repent, and amend their Lives, viz. *That they that are given to Adultery, and Fornication, ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, Gal. v. 19, 20, 21. SERM. I.

By which you may ſee, what an heinous Sin this is, which you committed with one another; and what great Danger you have brought

SERM. I. brought your ſelves into of the Wrath to come; even, *To be caſt into the Lake of Fire, and Brimſtone*; where the Scripture ſays, that, *Whoremongers*, and all other great Tranſgreſſors ſhall be caſt; that is, except they repent, and leave off their Sins, *Rev.* xxi. 8.

And therefore as the Law of our Land, and alſo the Law of God, is favourable unto you; and does ſpare you with Life, to this very End, that *you ſhould repent of the Adultery, and Fornication, that you have committed*; ſo you ſhould make this good Uſe of it; and ſo long as you live, ſhould ſorrowfully remember this great Crime, that you have committed; and *ſhould ſorrow for it to Repentance, or after a godly Manner*; by living more holily, and unblameably, and more ſtrictly, and conſcientiouſly in all Things, even all the Remainder of your Days.

Thirdly, Another grievous Circumſtance of this Crime of yours, is, that it was a great Injury, and Trouble of Mind to your Wife.

SERM. I.

I have hitherto ſhewn you, that this Crime of yours was a great Breach of the Law of God concerning Marriage, and of your own ſolemn Vow, and Promiſe, to your Wife, at your Marriage; and therefore for you ſo notoriouſly to break it, muſt be a great Injury, and conſequently a great Grief, if not an Heart-breaking to your Wife.

For you may be ſure, that ſhe could not but violently ſuſpect it, if ſhe did not too well know it; which could not but greatly trouble her, and make her Life weariſom to her; if it did not bring down her gray Hairs with Sorrow to the Grave. All which Circumſtances you yourſelf are the beſt Judge of; and ſo, the more Sorrow that you know it was to your Wife, the more ſorrowful you ought to be for it your ſelf; and the more ſeverely to condemn your ſelf for all the Wrong, and Vexation, that you thereby brought unto your Wife.

SERM. I.

And alſo now that ſhe is dead, and gone into another World; if we may ſuppoſe, that ſhe is gone to complain of you unto God; this would be fit to ſtrike you to the very Heart, and to make you *repent ſeriouſly, and to be ſorry after a godly Manner*: That you may avert, and eſcape the Judgments of God, which are due unto you; and which otherwiſe would moſt certainly, one or other of them, fall upon you, for the Sake of your late injur'd Wife.

And tho' you may think this ſtrange, it is no unlikely, or unreaſonable Suppoſition to make. For there are many Examples, and Sayings in Scripture of this Nature; concerning the Sighs, and Tears, and Cries, and Complaints, of poor injur'd Perſons, both alive and dead; of their Cries, I ſay, unto God, againſt thoſe that any ways abuſed them: And moreover, that God does take Notice, and does pity all ſuch poor afflicted People; and does regard their Cries, and will avenge them of their Adverſaries; or of all thoſe that oppreſs them, or that do them any harm. For it

is ſaid that, *The Lord executeth Righteouſneſs, and Judgment, for all that are oppreſſed,* Pſalm. ciii. 6. And particularly, St. *James* inſtances in poor Servants, and Labourers, that are forced to work for their Living under ſome hard-hearted Maſters, that cruelly oppreſs them; or, as the * Scripture ſays, *Grind the Faces of the Poor*; in making them grind, or work hard in their Service, and giving them too little for their Labour; but abuſing them ſeveral Ways, by delaying, or defrauding, or abridging, and beating them down in their Wages; that ſuch poor People have often too much Reaſon to complain, and that their Complaints do reach the Ears of the Almighty. For, ſays St. *James*, *Behold the Hire of the Labourers, which have reaped down your Fields, which is of you kept back by Fraud, crieth; and the Cries of them which have reaped, are enter'd into the Ears of the Lord of Sabaoth*, James v. 4. Which, by the Way, may ſatisfy us concerning another Caſe; *viz.* How bad, and alſo how dangerous a Thing it is, to oppreſs thoſe that are under us, or that do any Work

SERM. I.

* Iſaiah iii. 15.

SERM. I. for us: And therefore, that we ſhould always take care to give them their Hire in due Time, and alſo to the full; or rather with the better, and not with the worſe: And in all other Reſpects, to do well unto them.

And ſo it is, with all other * poor People; that if we any Ways injure, or oppreſs them, and if they do juſtly complain; or otherwiſe, indeed, if any that are poor will complain without Cauſe, or claim Relief without Need, or Pity without Deſert; then their Cries, or Complaints, will not be much regarded, either of God or Man; except it be againſt themſelves, and to their own Hurt. For, as *Solomon* ſays of one Man's curſing another without Occaſion, that it can't hurt him; that, *The Curſe cauſeleſs ſhall not come*, Prov. xxvi. 2. So we may ſay of the Cries, or Complaints, of

* Malachi iii. 5. There thus ſaith the Lord, *I will come near to you to Judgment; and I will be a ſwift Witneſs againſt the Sorcerers, and againſt the Adulterers, and againſt falſe Swearers, and againſt thoſe that oppreſs the Hireling in his Wages, the Widow, and the Fatherleſs, and that turn aſide the Stranger from his Right, and fear not me, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.*

of the Poor againſt the Rich; that if they be cauſeleſs, or groundleſs, they will come to nothing; or if they do come to any Thing, it will certainly be to do themſelves the moſt Miſchief. SERM. I.

For as the *Curſe cauſeleſs* will certainly fall more upon the Head of him that uttereth it, than upon him that it is uttered againſt; ſo all cauſeleſs Cries, and Complaints, of the Poor will fall moſt upon themſelves; and will ſet all others, and even God himſelf the more againſt them; for complaining without Cauſe. But now, I ſay, on the other Side, if the Poor, by Reaſon of the Hardneſs of their Caſe, do at any Time juſtly complain; that is, if we do any Ways injure, or oppreſs them, and give them Cauſe to complain, or to cry unto God againſt us; or only to mourn ſecretly, or ſorrowfully to ſigh in their Breaſts, thro' the Bitterneſs of their Souls, it is ſoon heard of God; and will be remembered againſt us, and reveng'd upon us; if we don't repent, and amend our evil Dealings towards them. For thus ſaith the Lord, *For the Oppreſſion of the*

SERM. I. *Poor, for the Sighing of the Needy, now will I ariſe, ſaith the Lord; I will ſet him in Safety, from him that puffeth at him,* Pſalm xii. 5. And this, you ſee, is ſaid, not only of the *Oppreſſion of the Poor*, but alſo of the *Sighing of the Needy*; that if we be * hard-hearted towards them, tho' we don't hurt them, or wrong them, yet if we don't relieve them in their Neceſſities; that then their very Sighs are enough to condemn us, and to raiſe up God againſt us, to puniſh us. Which ſhould make us careful, to carry well to thoſe of low Degree; for tho' they be low, and mean, and poor;

* Deut. xv. 7—12. *If there be among you a poor Man of one of thy Brethren, within any of thy Gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee; thou ſhalt not harden thy Heart, nor ſhut thine Hand from thy poor Brother: But thou ſhalt open thine Hand wide unto him, and ſhalt ſurely lend him ſufficient for his Need, in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a Thought in thy wicked Heart, ſaying, The ſeventh Year, the Year of Releaſe, is at Hand; and thine Eye be evil againſt thy poor Brother, and thou giveſt him nought, and he cry unto the Lord againſt thee, and it be Sin unto thee: Thou ſhalt ſurely give him, and thine Heart ſhall not be grieved when thou giveſt unto him: Becauſe that for this Thing the Lord thy God ſhall bleſs thee in all thy Works, and in all that thou putteſt thine Hand unto. For the Poor ſhall never ceaſe out of the Land: Therefore I command thee, ſaying, Thou ſhalt open thine Hand wide unto thy Brother, to thy Poor, and to thy Needy, in thy Land.*

poor; yet, are they highly regarded of God; and the more ſo, becauſe of their poor, and pitiful Condition. As God hath plainly declar'd himſelf, in his holy Word, to be *a Father of the Fatherleſs, a Judge of the Widows, a Defender of the Poor, and an Avenger of the Oppreſſed*, and the like. That is, God will take Part with the weakeſt, againſt thoſe that are too ſtrong for them, and deal too hardly with them. Which therefore he ſtrictly warns us againſt, ſaying; *Thou ſhalt not afflict the Widow, and fatherleſs Child; if thou afflict them in any wiſe, and they complain at all unto me; I will ſurely hear their Cry*, Exod. xxii. 22, 23. SERM. I.

By which we may ſee, how much God takes the Cauſe of the Helpleſs and Poor into his Hand, when they commit themſelves unto him; to vindicate them, when they are in a good Cauſe, or in a real pitiful Caſe. Then, I ſay, God will ſtand by them; and will either help them, and relieve them, and right them now; or elſe, will hereafter moſt terribly avenge them of their Enemies, if they will not turn, and

SERM. I. repent, and leave off their Unmercifulneſs, and their Oppreſſion of the Poor. For God is very mindful of the Poor, and of the Afflicted, and of all other People's Carriage to them; and of all their Complaints againſt others, that do any Thing to vex them. *For their very Groans, and Sighs, do pierce through the Clouds, and the Skies; and their Lamentations, and Cries, do enter into God's Ears; and alſo their Tears are put into his Bottle; and all their Complaints are noted in his Book.* Which, and many other ſuch like familiar Expreſſions, of a moſt tender Affection and Concern, are made Uſe of in the Holy Scriptures, to ſhew, how much God loveth, and careth for the Poor.

And alſo to ſhew how dangerous, and how wicked a Thing it is, any Ways to injure, or to grieve poor People; who can't help, or right themſelves; becauſe they have ſo great a Friend in Heaven, who will, one Time or other, do it for them. Therefore the poorer, and the weaker, that any People are; and the more that they are in our Power, to do what we will with them;

them; the more careful ſhould we be, what we do to them. Becauſe the more unable they are to revenge, or right themſelves; the more God will ſtand up for them, to avenge them of all thoſe that oppreſs them. SERM. I.

And ſo much I have ſaid, partly by the by; as a Caution to us, not to oppreſs, or hurt, any that are under us; that are harmleſs, and helpleſs; for fear of ſome worſe Thing befalling us for it. And partly, by Way of Compariſon, to let you ſee the Sin, and the Danger, of your evil Carriage to your late Wife; particularly in this heinous Crime, and Offence againſt her: Wherein ſhe was, like all other poor helpleſs People, without any Remedy, or Revenge, but what was to come from God above. For ſhe could not hinder you, from doing what you did againſt her; neither could ſhe tell how to right, or help herſelf. The moſt that ſhe, or any other poor Woman could do, in ſuch a Caſe, was to ſigh, and mourn, and cry, and complain; and you ſee how great a Score ſuch Things make in God's Book of Accounts, againſt all

SERM. I. all thoſe that vex, and abuſe ſuch weak, and helpleſs, and innocent Ones.

And now that ſhe is gone, and as it were out of your Way; and far enough, as you may think, from diſturbing, or hurting you; yet you are not ſo ſafe, as you may imagine; but you are yet in Danger of her Complaints againſt you. For, as I ſaid before, not only the Living, but alſo the Dead, are ſaid in Scripture to cry unto God for Vengeance, againſt thoſe that have harmed them. And thus St. *John* in his Viſions, or Book of Revelations, ſpeaks of thoſe that were ſlain, or brought to their Grave by others before their Time; as if they were frequently crying unto God for Vengeance againſt their Oppreſſors, Perſecutors, or Murderers: Saying, *How long, O Lord, holy, and true, wilt thou not judge, and avenge our Blood, on them that dwell on the Earth?* Rev. vi. 10.

And ſomething like this we may ſuppoſe of this great Crime, and Injury, that you

you did your late Wife; in loving another Woman beſide her, or perhaps more than her; the Sighs, and Tears, that it might force from her when alive; and her Cries for Vengeance, now that ſhe is dead; or, what is the ſame, if ſhe herſelf is now at reſt, and does hold her Peace; yet her pitiful Caſe does highly cry out to God againſt you. For, as it is ſaid of *the Blood of* Abel, *that it did cry unto God from the Ground againſt his Brother that ſlew him*, Gen. iv. 10. So the great Injury, that you did your late Wife, by your Kindneſs, or Wickedneſs, with this Woman, does yet cry aloud unto Heaven againſt you; and would moſt certainly, one Way or other, bring Vengeance from God upon you, either in this World or the next; if you be not *truly penitent, and ſorry for it, after a godly Manner.* SERM. I.

And this is the Drift of my Diſcourſe, of what I have hitherto ſaid, and have further to ſay unto you, about this Matter; and I hope you will make this good Uſe of it, to lay it to Heart, and greatly

to

SERM. I. to humble yourſelves before God for it, that he may forgive you. And therefore, as St. *Peter* formerly adviſ'd a great Offender, tho' in a quite different Caſe from yours; ſaying unto him, *Repent therefore of this thy Wickedneſs; and pray God, if perhaps the Thought of thy Heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive, that thou art in the Gall of Bitterneſs, and in the Bond of Iniquity. Then anſwer'd the Man, and ſaid, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of theſe Things, which ye have ſpoken, come upon me*, Acts viii. 22, 23. So I ſay unto you both, that ye muſt repent of this your great Wickedneſs, and be ſo really moved with godly Sorrow for the ſame, as both yourſelves to be often praying unto God; that this evil Deed of yours, with all the evil Thoughts, and Devices, and Deſires of your Hearts about it, may be forgiven you; and that none of all thoſe evil Things, which ye have deſerv'd, may come upon you. And that ye muſt alſo deſire other People to pray for you; that God may be gracious unto you, and pardon, and ſpare you, and bleſs you

in

in one another, and in all that belong unto you. SERM. I.

And this is the good End of your appearing here at this Time; to confeſs your Fault, and to profeſs your godly Sorrow for it; and to deſire the Congregation to join in Prayer to God, to forgive you, and to prevent his Judgments from falling upon you: Which I dare ſay that all of us here preſent, and all others that are virtuouſly inclin'd, and godly minded, would be very willing, and much incourag'd to do; and alſo with the greater Hope of Succeſs, and Acceptance with God; if we may believe, that *you are truly penitent, and do ſorrow for your Fault, after a godly Manner.*

And this, I hope, we ſhall all do; and that, not only for you, but alſo for ourſelves; and that we ſhall every one make this good Uſe of this ſad Occaſion, not only to be concern'd for yours, but alſo to call our own Sins to Remembrance, and to be ſo ſincerely ſorry for them, as thoroughly to forſake them; and then, we may

SERM. I. may be ſure of finding Forgiveneſs with God, and to be reſtor'd to his Favour, and put into the Way of his Bleſſing, and even to be made moſt bleſſed for ever. *Amen.*

SER-

SERMON II.

Cautions againſt Whoring.

2 COR. vii. 9.

Now I rejoice, not that ye were made ſorry, but that ye ſorrowed to Repentance: For ye were made ſorry after a godly Manner.

SERM. II.

IN treating of the great Sin of Adultery, and Fornication, I have hitherto conſider'd it chiefly with reſpect to the married State; and therein have ſhewn, what a Wickedneſs it is in thoſe that are married, to offend in that Manner: What a Violation it is of the *ſacred Inſtitution of Marriage, ordain'd of God himſelf*; and what

SERM. II. a direct Breach it is of the ſolemn Vow, and Promiſe of the perfecteſt Love, and of the greateſt Fidelity, which all are oblig'd to make at their Marriage; and alſo what a great Damage, Offence, and Trouble, it muſt be to the injur'd Perſon, whether the Huſband or the Wife, to be ſo grievouſly wrong'd by the other; and conſequently, how much all thoſe that are guilty of it may expect to ſuffer, either in this World or the next; if they don't *truly repent of it after a moſt hearty, and godly Manner.* In order to bring all ſuch whereunto, ~~eſpecially you two, who appear here as humble Penitents for it;~~ I ſhall now proceed to ſhew you ſome other heinous Circumſtances of this ſhameful Sin, even of a worſe Nature, however of a larger Extent. As,

Fourthly, Another great Aggravation, and grievous Circumſtance, of this great Crime of yours is this, that it is a great Offence to all your Neighbours, and indeed to all true Chriſtians, that ſhall ever come to the Knowledge of it.

For

SERM. II.

For you may be ſure, that all your Relations, and Friends, and all your Acquaintance, that have any Kindneſs for you, can't but be offended at it, and very much griev'd, and even aſham'd for you; that you ſhould be guilty of ſuch a ſcandalous, and wicked Thing. And eſpecially all Perſons of real Virtue, Reputation, and Religion, can't but be greatly troubled at Heart, even with a right godly Sorrow; that ſuch a wicked Thing ſhould be done, by any that profeſs themſelves to be Chriſtians. It can't, I ſay, but be a great Grief, and Matter of Humiliation, to all thoſe that have any Senſe of Virtue, and Religion in them, to hear of ſuch an ill Thing being done; eſpecially if it were to go unpuniſh'd, or to remain unrepented of. As this ſame Apoſtle declares for himſelf, in this very Caſe of yours, how much he was troubled, and humbled, upon ſuch a ſad Occaſion. For ſays he, *I fear, leſt, when I come again, my God will humble me among you; and that I ſhall bewail many, that have ſinned already; and have not repented of the Uncleanneſs, and Fornication, and*

SERM. II. *Laſciviouſneſs, that they have committed,* 2 Cor. xii. 21. Now if all others, that have any Goodneſs in them, can't but be ſorry to hear of ſuch a ſhameful Deed done; then how much more Reaſon have you both to be ſorrowful, that you were guilty of ſuch an odious, and ſcandalous Thing?

And tho' ſome fooliſh, and wicked People may, perhaps, rejoice at it; and even make a Mock, or a Jeſt of it; as it is noted in Scripture, as the greateſt Folly, or as the *peculiar Property of Fools, to make a Mock at Sin* *; yet it is no leſs an Offence, and does a great deal of Miſchief, even among thoſe fooliſh wicked People; by hardening them in their Wickedneſs, and by encouraging them to go on in their evil Ways, to follow vain Perſons, and to haunt Harlots Houſes, and the like; or elſe, by indulging themſelves the more freely in ſome other Vices, which they are moſt inclined to; and that, without any Fear of Puniſhment, if you had quite eſcap'd unpuniſh'd for this great Tranſgreſſion

* Prov. xiv. 9.

greſſion of yours. Yea, notwithſtanding what you are put upon doing here; yet if you were afterwards, either by your Speech or Carriage, to ſhew your ſelves impenitent, and unconcern'd, for that great Sin of yours; it would be a doing what you can, to draw other People in, and alſo to imbolden them in it; that is, without any Concern, or Sorrow of Heart for their Sins, to do any Thing, how ill ſoever, that they have a Mind to, if they find that you are no better for this; if your future Behaviour don't prove your Repentance to be true, and your Sorrow for your Fault to be of a godly Sort. SERM. II.

And finally, to all Kinds of evil Doers, even the worſt of all, that are Lovers of Wickedneſs, and Haters of Godlineſs, and Enemies to God, and to all Goodneſs; this Crime of yours would be a moſt ſad Offence; even ſo far, as to give them Occaſion to blaſpheme, and ſpeak evil of God; and to harbour an ill Opinion of his holy Word, and of his Worſhip, and of all Religion, and of all the Profeſſors of it; if any of them might commit Adultery, or Forni-

SERM. II. cation, without being taken notice of, or any Way puniſh'd for it; or were not brought to ſome Shame, and did not ſhew ſome Sorrow for it; even an hearty, and godly Sorrow for their Crime. Which therefore you ought to do; both to prevent thoſe that are given to that Vice from going on, and growing worſe; and alſo to prevent others, who are yet innocent, from giving Way to ſuch an heinous Sin; which they ſee ſome brought to ſo much Shame, and to ſo much Sorrow for. For you yourſelves can't but be convinc'd of this, that if you were to appear no Way concern'd, either with Shame, or with Sorrow for your Fault; it would be a great Offence, and Temptation to others, to entice, or incline them, to do the like. It could not but greatly encourage thoſe that are unmarry'd to go aſtray, when a marry'd Perſon does ſhew them the Way; and it would, moſt likely, put thoſe that are young upon doing the ſame, when one advanc'd in Years could not refrain.

So much Reaſon have you *to repent, and to be heartily ſorry, even with a godly Sorrow,*

Sorrow, for this great Sin of yours; in order to remove all the Offences, that you have given by it; and alſo to prevent any others from taking Offence, or learning Wickedneſs from it. As, if you have any Principles of Religion yet remaining in you, you can't but *moſt ſeriouſly ſorrow to Repentance*, for what you have moſt raſhly, and rudely done; for fear of any others taking Example by you, to do wickedly; either in this, or in any other Way. SERM. II.

And again, *Fifthly*, The laſt, and greateſt Aggravation of this heinous Sin of yours is, that it is a great Treſpaſs, and Offence againſt God. It is a Sin, which God hath forbidden us in his Commandments, next unto Murder; as a Sin that is next to it in Wickedneſs, and Miſchief; and therefore that, next to Murder, every one ſhould be afraid to commit Adultery, or Fornication; becauſe, it is a Sort of murdering one's-ſelf, both Soul and Body. And therefore, the Apoſtle calls it *a Sin againſt a Man's own Body* *; thereby to warn every one, the more carefully to flée from it.

* 1 Cor. vi. 18.

SERM. II.

Now, if we conſider our *Bodies as Places, which God delighteth to dwell in, or as Temples of the Holy Ghoſt*; it ſhews, how heinous a Thing it is, to make them Inſtruments of Uncleanneſs, and Fornication, or of any Unrighteouſneſs unto Sin. For ſays the Apoſtle, *What, know ye not, that your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt, which is in you; which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?* 1 Cor. vi. 19. Or, if we conſider our Bodies, as Members of Chriſt's Body, the Church; it makes the Sin of Adultery, and Fornication, to be ſo great, as no Chriſtian ſhould dare to be guilty of. As the Apoſtle argueth in the ſame Place; for ſays he, *Know ye not, that your Bodies are the Members of Chriſt? Shall I then take the Members of Chriſt, and make them the Members of an Harlot? God forbid,* 1 Cor. vi. 15. Or, if we conſider our Bodies only, as the Work of God; it is a great Shame, and Sin, to uſe them ſo baſely, as to commit Filthineſs, and Fornication, with them. As the Holy Scripture puts us in Mind; ſaying, *This is the Will of God, even your Sanctifi-*

Sanctification; that ye ſhould abſtain from Fornication. That every one of you ſhould know how to poſſeſs his Veſſel in Sanctification, and Honour; not in the Luſts of Concupiſcence, as the Gentiles, which know not God. For God hath not call'd you unto Uncleanneſs, but unto Holineſs, 1 Theſſ. iv. 3—8.

SERM. II.

Upon all theſe Accounts both Adultery, and alſo Fornication, is a very grievous Sin; for it greatly debaſeth a Man, and diſhonoureth his Body, and defileth his Mind, and maketh him like the Gentiles, or almoſt like the Beaſts. It is alſo contrary to the good Will of God, and grieveth the Holy Spirit, and maketh all that our bleſſed Saviour hath done, to be of no Effect with ſuch a one. For the Son of God, our bleſſed Saviour, will not redeem ſuch a one; neither will God the Father love him, nor the Holy Ghoſt dwell or abide with him, that abuſeth his Body to Fornication, and keepeth it not holy unto the Lord. So that ſuch a vile Sinner is not worthy to be called a Child of God, or a Member of Chriſt, or a Temple of

SERM. II. the Holy Ghoſt; nor is capable of Sanctification, or Juſtification, or Redemption, or Salvation; ſo long as he goes on to indulge himſelf in the heinous Sin of Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, or the like. But if he conſiders, and gives it over, and brings forth Fruits meet for Repentance, by leading a virtuous and godly Life ever after; then, indeed, the Caſe is quite alter'd, becauſe he is become, as it were, another Man, or a new Man; and ſo, is in a very hopeful, or ſure Way of Salvation, notwithſtanding all the Evil that he hath formerly done; which upon his Repentance, and Converſion, ſhall not be imputed unto him. But without Repentance, and Newneſs of Life, there is no Hope of Salvation, for any one that lives in the heinous Sin of Fornication. So much is the Sin of Fornication a Sin againſt ourſelves, and eſpecially a Sin againſt Almighty God.

It is moreover a great Sin, and Offence againſt God, as it is a Sin againſt others, or a Sin committed with others. For a Man can't be wicked this Way, without making

making another as wicked as himſelf; which adds much to the Guilt, and to the Burden of the Sin of Fornication: Becauſe it is a ſad Thing to be Partners in Iniquity, or to be Partakers with other Peoples Sins; or to have other Peoples Sins to anſwer for, as well as their own; by making one, or two, or perhaps many, as bad as themſelves. SERM. II.

But eſpecially, in thoſe that are married, the Miſchief, and the Offence, and the Sin is the greater: Becauſe thereby a Man does a great deal more Miſchief, and grievouſly ſins both Ways; both againſt the Woman, that he makes an Harlot of; and alſo againſt his own Wife, that he is ſo unfaithful, and unkind to. For it is the greateſt Wrong, that a Man can do to his Wife; and the greateſt Provocation, that a Wife can give to her Huſband, to be guilty of criminal Converſation with another; which is ſuch an Injury, and Provocation, as ſcarce any Man can bear; yea, can ſcarce bear the Thought, or the Jealouſy of. For, as *Solomon* ſays, *Jealouſy is the Rage of a Man; therefore he will*

SERM. II. *will not ſpare thee in the Day of Vengeance. He will not regard any Ranſom; neither will he reſt contented, though thou give many Gifts,* Prov. vi. 34, 35.

For theſe, and many other great Reaſons, God ſtrictly forbiddeth us the great Sin of Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, and the like; and ſeverely threatneth all thoſe that, after all, dare to indulge themſelves in any ſuch abominable Wickedneſs. For the Scripture aſſures us, that *Whoremongers, and Adulterers, God will judge,* Heb. xiii. 4. And, indeed, God does ſometimes remarkably judge, or ſeverely puniſh Whoremongers, and Adulterers, even in this Life; by giving them over to their own Hearts Luſts, to follow their own vain Imaginations, till they come to be almoſt deſperate; and that, not only as to the State of their Souls, but alſo as to their worldly Eſtate. For ſuch evil Doers do very often grow careleſs in their Affairs, and waſtful of their Goods; and run themſelves into many Straits, and Troubles; and bring upon themſelves many bodily Pains, and Diſeaſes; beſides the great

great Torture of a guilty Conſcience, which is always the ſad Companion of that, and of all ſuch heinous Tranſgreſſions. SERM. II.

And if, after all this, ſuch evil Doers can't be made weary of their Wickedneſs, and be brought to Repentance, and to leave off their Sins; then God will judge them, or puniſh them moſt ſadly hereafter. For, as the Scripture ſpeaketh expreſly of *Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, Laſciviouſneſs, and all the other Works of the Fleſh; that they, that do ſuch Things, ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, Gal. v. 19—22. And as Whoremongers, and Adulterers, ſhall have no Inheritance in the Kingdom of God; ſo they muſt, on the contrary, have their Inheritance, or their Portion, among ſuch evil Doers as themſelves; and in ſuch ſad Things, as they deſerve; even in the Lake, and Torments of Hell. As it is written, that *the Fearful*, that is, ſuch as dare not do their Duty to God for fear of Men, or for fear of coming to ſome Harm, or Trouble by it; that all ſuch *fearful* and falſe hearted Chriſtians, *and Unbelievers, and the Abominable,*

and

SERM. II. *and Murderers, and Whoremongers, and Sorcerers, and Idolaters, and all Liars, ſhall have their Part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimſtone, which is the ſecond Death,* Rev. xxi. 8.

And thus, God does often ſend ſome of the worſt Calamities of this Life, and does threaten the greateſt Torments of the next, upon Whoremongers, and Adulterers, and ſuch like evil Doers; that, except they repent, they ſhall all periſh eternally. And therefore, as this is the great Crime, which you have been guilty of, and this the ſore Judgment, which you have made yourſelves liable to; and which there is no eſcaping, but by Repentance, and a godly Sorrow for your Fault; it is therefore very adviſable for you both, to bring yourſelves to this truly penitent and godly Mind, as ſoon, and as ſeriouſly as you can.

For though I have all along directed my Diſcourſe chiefly to the Man; yet, as the Woman was in the ſame Tranſgreſſion, and as deeply concern'd in the Guilt; ſo ſhe ought to be in the Shame, and Sorrow for

for it. And how great a Tranſgreſſion that is, and how ſorrowful you ought to be for it, I may, after all, appeal to both your Conſciences; which would greatly condemn you of much Guilt in this Caſe, if you would but put the Caſe to yourſelves, now that you are married. As, if ſhe, that is now your Wife, ſhould be kind with another Man, as ſhe was with you in your late Wife's Time; how ill would you take it of him, eſpecially of her; and how wrathfully would you look upon her, as a moſt perfidious and baſe Woman, for ſo greatly wronging you in ſuch a Manner? And yet, ſo greatly did you both wrong your late Wife. Or, on the other Side, if your Maid-Servant ſhould play the Whore with your Huſband, as you did with him before you were married, and even when his other Wife was alive; what an unfaithful Servant would you think her, and what a wicked Creature would you call her? And yet, ſuch a one was you to your late Miſtreſs. Such a Suppoſition, I ſay, as this would convince you both, and perhaps more than any Thing elſe that I can ſay unto you, how very wicked you were SERM. II.

SERM. II. were both in this Thing; even you, as well as he. For, tho' you were not then a married Woman, yet, your Crime was with a married Man; and ſo, you are equally guilty of all the Breaches of his Marriage Covenant, and of the Violation of his ſolemn Vow at it; and of all the Injuries done to his former Wife, and of all the Sorrows brought upon her by it; and thereby, you are equally liable to all the ſore Judgments and Vengeance, that her own Cries and Complaints, or her lamentable Caſe, may cauſe to come upon you for it; if you do not equally repent. And you are alſo equally guilty of all the Evils and Offences, that may come to any others, from this ſhameful Deed of yours; becauſe thereby you alſo, as well as he, have given great Cauſe of Trouble to thoſe that are good; and as great Encouragement to thoſe that are bad; and indeed have thereby laid a Snare, and a Temptation, for all that would follow you, to do the ſame Thing; beſides the great Occaſion of Scandal that you have brought upon yourſelf, and your Sex, by your Lightneſs, and Lewdneſs. All which

can't but be a great Offence, and Treſpaſs againſt God; and muſt provoke his Indignation againſt you, if you don't truly repent of it. SERM. II.

And therefore, for an Application of what hath been ſaid, I intreat you both alike, to conſider with yourſelves, and with one another, what Wickedneſs, and Miſchief, you have hereby done; and to lay it ſeriouſly to Heart, ſo as to beget in you a godly Sorrow, and an utter Abhorrence of it, with a great Indignation againſt yourſelves for it, ſo long as you live: That, ſo often as you ſhall hereafter think of it, (as you ſhould often think of it on Purpoſe) you may be humble, and exceeding ſorrowful for it.

And that, as you are now married to one another, which was moſt proper for you to be; becauſe as you had been naught together, you were the fitteſt for one another; ſo you ought to ſtrive together, to bring one another to a true Senſe of your Sin, and of the exceeding Sinfulneſs of it, and to a thorough Repentance, and a godly

SERM. II. godly Sorrow for it; and not, by any Means, to encourage and harden one another in it; which is a Thing, that you ought, above all, to avoid, and to be afraid of falling into; I mean, into a Shameleſneſs, and an Hardneſs of Heart; which is one of the greateſt Plagues, or Curſes, that one can be under, on this Side Hell; and is a certain Sign of great Enmity with God, and of an Averſion to that which is good; and is a ſure forerunning Sign of God's Wrath; and, if perſiſted in, will lead at laſt to the great Day of Wrath. For when any Perſons commit a great Crime, like this of yours, and are not afraid, and greatly concern'd for it; but rather think light of it, as a common Thing among Men, which many have been guilty of beſide themſelves, and ſo, harden themſelves in it; it looks as if they were paſt Shame, or paſt Grace; and ſo, paſt all Hopes of eſcaping the Judgments of God, eſpecially the Judgment to come. Which, I ſay, you ought, above all Things, to endeavour to eſcape, and moſt of all to be afraid of falling into; more than of falling to Decay, by having your Subſtance blaſted,

blaſted, and waſting away by ſome evil Accidents, or by your own Folly and Extravagance, till you be brought very low. But you ought to be more afraid of the Judgment to come, more than of any Thing that can happen wrong to you in this preſent Life; more than if you ſhould even meet with much Diſappointment, and Vexation from one another, or from any others; or ſhould have ſome other great Croſſes and Afflictions befalling you, as the natural Fruits, and Wages of your Sin; and which have been often known to befal many others in your Caſe, I mean in your Crime; and which you may well fear, will befal you alſo; if you will not ſeriouſly ſet yourſelves to repent. But what you ought, I ſay, moſt of all to be afraid of, is the heavy Wrath of God, and the Judgment to come; and what does unavoidably lead unto it, that is, an Hardneſs of Heart, and an Obſtinacy in Sin. For while any People wilfully perſiſt in their Sins, they muſt be in danger of meeting with ſome great worldly Trouble; or however, they muſt be in a continual Dread, and fearful looking for Judgment. To SERM. II.

SERM. II. avoid all which you muſt repent, and humble yourſelves before God; and do what you can, to get your Hearts into a right Frame; or, into a real Sorrow for this, and for all your other Sins.

And this is the only ſure Way of eſcaping all the Evils, that are due to you for this great Crime, and to eſcape all the Judgments of God; not only thoſe which, even in this Life, God is often ſending upon the Wicked for their Sins; eſpecially, for ſuch heinous Sins as thoſe of Adultery, and Fornication; but alſo, is the only ſure Way of eſcaping the Judgment, or fleeing from the Wrath to come.

For when God ſees your godly Sorrow, and your true Repentance, he will be gracious unto you; and forgive you the Evil of your doing; and may be pleaſed to prevent any ſore Judgment from falling upon you for it in this World; and alſo to ſave, and deliver you, from the Terribleneſs of the Wrath to come. So much Good may you get by being truly ſorry for your Fault, or ſorrowing after a godly Manner; that

that it will bring you to Repentance, and Repentance will lead you to Salvation; and then, you will never repent, or be ſorry, that you were put upon this *Duty of repenting, and ſorrowing towards God, for your Sins.* For, as it is ſaid in the Verſe following the Text, *Godly Sorrow worketh Repentance to Salvation, not to be repented of.* And thus I wiſh, that you would be ſorry for your Fault after a ſincere godly Manner; and make your Repentance ſuch, as need not to be repented of. SERM. II.

I have only one Thing more to deſire of you both, and which you yourſelves may think very proper to perform; and that is, that you would forgive one another this great Crime, which you committed together; and that you would never reproach one another with it. For as you would think it hard, to be told of it hereafter by any others; as indeed it would be unjuſt, and uncharitable in any one, ever to tell you of it, now that you have made all the Satisfaction for it, that the Law requires; and have confeſs'd your Fault, and profeſs'd your Repentance, and

SERM. II. Sorrow for it, and that, as we may hope, after an hearty, and godly Manner; as it would not, I ſay, be well in any others, and as you would not take it well of them, to tell you any more of your Fault, after you have now ſo publickly own'd it, and beg'd Pardon for it; ſo, you yourſelves ſhould not do it to one another. You ſhould not ſo much as ever mention it, except it be by Way of Repentance, Sorrow, and Humiliation; but not, by any Means, to upbraid one another with it. But ſhould fully forgive one another all that is paſt; and, for the future, endeavour to live lovingly, and quietly, and honeſtly, and innocently together; as ye hope to be forgiven, and to be beloved of God.

And now, in the laſt Place, for another Application, which may concern us all; and that is, that we ſhould carefully avoid all thoſe evil Ways, which may bring upon us either Shame, or Sorrow; which are indeed the common Fruits, and Wages, and Effects of all Wickedneſs, to bring the Doers thereof to Shame, and Trouble, and Pain, and Sickneſs, and Death itſelf; and,

after

after all, to the Death eternal, if it be not ſeriouſly repented of. And this made the Apoſtle think, that it would be a good Argument with all ſuch who have any Conſcience, or Conſideration in them, to turn them from their Sins; by putting them in Mind of the ill Effects of them. For ſays he, *What Fruit had ye then in thoſe Things, whereof ye are now aſham'd? for the End of thoſe Things is Death*, Rom. vi. 21. And therefore, let us all be careful to avoid all ſuch ſhameful, and hurtful Things. And if we have hitherto been too careleſs, or rather wicked in our Lives; and have done too many Things amiſs, whether by Word or Deed; to the Shame of ourſelves, the Offence of others, and the Diſpleaſure of God, let us heartily repent of it; and ſtrive to live better for the future, by walking circumſpectly in all our Ways; that ſo, we may blot out all our former Tranſgreſſions, and wipe off all our Shame, and recover our Reputation, and remove all the Offences that we have given, and regain the Favour of God, with the Love and Reſpect of all good Men, and withal enjoy the Comfort of a quiet, and good Conſcience within ourſelves. SERM. II.

SERM. II.

And, in like Manner, if by our former Folly and Wickedneſs, we have ſometimes brought ourſelves into great Danger and Harm, or have provok'd God to ſend ſome Troubles upon us, let us be ſorry for it; and that, not after a worldly, but after a godly Manner. That is, let us not at any Time grieve, or fret ourſelves for our Troubles, ſo much as for our Sins; and let us not ſo often think how great our Troubles are, as how greatly we have deſerv'd them; and let us not deſire ſo much to get out of our Troubles, as to get out of our Sins; or rather, let us ſtrive to get out of our Sins, and that will be the beſt Way, to get out of our Troubles too.

For, to conclude, if we will but thus ſorrow for our Troubles, or rather for our Sins, which are the Occaſion of them; if we will but ſorrow for them to Repentance, or after a godly Manner, it may pleaſe God to remove them both away from us; both to pardon our Sins, and to take away our Troubles; and to wipe a-

way

way all Tears from our Eyes, and all Sor- SERM.
row from our Hearts; and to make both II.
our Lives, and our Conſciences, more eaſy, and comfortable to us, all the Remainder of our Days; and finally, to give us good Hopes of being happy in the Life everlaſting, thro' Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *Amen.*

SERMON III.

Directions about Marrying.

HEB. xiii. 4.

Marriage is honourable in all, and the Bed undefiled; but Whoremongers, and Adulterers, God will judge.

SERM. III.

IN this Chapter there are ſeveral ſhort, and weighty Sentences, as ſo many Proverbs, worthy to be obſerv'd, and remembred, by all that would lead a virtuous, and a godly Life; and among the reſt, this of the Text is as remarkable, and uſeful as any; towards the encouraging, and promoting of Piety, and Virtue;

tue; eſpecially thoſe of Purity, Modeſty, and Chaſtity among Mankind; by ſhewing them the Heinouſneſs, and the Unhappineſs, of the contrary Vices of Whoredom, and Adultery; by Reaſon of the Wrath, and Judgment of God againſt them; how that God will certainly judge, and puniſh, either in this World or the next, all thoſe that are given to ſuch Sins, without a timely, and true Repentance. SERM. III.

And for the eaſier avoiding of theſe Sins, the Text alſo ſhews them a Way to eſcape; by preſcribing, to all thoſe that ſtand in need of it, a Remedy allow'd, and ordain'd of God, towards this End; that is, the honourable, and holy State of Matrimony. That all thoſe might be inexcuſable who live in Whoredom, or Adultery; becauſe, there is no Occaſion for their ſo doing; ſeeing that they might marry, and ſo might live comfortably, and innocently; for, as the Text ſays, *The Marriage-bed is undefil'd.* Which therefore is much more adviſable, and commendable than to live in a looſe, and a lewd Manner; which is both a Sin, and a Shame; to prevent which,

Mar-

SERM. III. Marriage is recommended as a Duty, and that with great Advantage and Honour, to all thoſe that have Occaſion for it: For *Marriage is honourable in all.* Whereas, on the contrary, for any Perſons to live diſorderly in Uncleanneſs, and Laſciviouſneſs, without marrying, or before Marriage, they make themſelves guilty of Whoredom, and thereby liable to God's Judgments. For *Whoremongers, and Adulterers, God will judge.*

Theſe Words of the Text ſeem to be purpoſely directed againſt the baſe Principles, and bad Practices, of ſome Men of ungodly Minds, and of looſe Lives; who, that they may live after their own Hearts Luſts, do what they can, both by their Words and Actions, to diſcourage, and to diſparage the *holy State of Matrimony.* And therefore the Apoſtle, in order to ſhew ſuch Men the Sin, and the Danger, of ſuch a ſhameful lewd Way of living, and alſo the Remedy for it, he recommends to them the married State; by telling them, that *Marriage is honourable in all*; that is, for all Perſons that are inclin'd to it, and

that are of ſufficient Age, and Diſcretion, to undertake ſo great a Concern; whether they be rich or poor, or of what Condition, or Calling, ſoever they be. For to this End, it is very wiſely order'd, by the good Providence of God, that there ſhould be ſo many different Degrees, and Conditions, of Men in the World; that all Perſons, that are virtuous and honeſt, and behave themſelves well in their Places, eſpecially if they be religious, and good; tho', in other Reſpects, they be but ordinary Perſons, or of mean Circumſtances; yet, if they be deſirous, they may provide themſelves with Helps meet for them, and may marry ſuitably enough to themſelves; and ſo may be under no Temptation, or Occaſion, of living diſorderly. SERM. III.

But if in ſome Caſes, or with ſome Perſons, it be otherwiſe; that is, if ſome Perſons will be indiſcreet, and improvident in their Callings; and will live idly, and extravagantly, to the Height of, or above what they have, even while they are ſingle; all ſuch are much more unfit for the marry'd State, ſo long as they live thus, as it

SERM. III. it were without any Thought; without taking any Pains to get, or any Care to ſave; but rather waſte their Subſtance with Riotouſneſs, or with a diſorderly, and expenſive Way of living.

Or if ſome others, that are of good Circumſtances, are nevertheleſs of ſuch ill Conditions, or of ſuch unſociable Tempers, or of ſuch corrupt Manners, that there is no Hope of living comfortably with them: Or if ſome others be of ſuch high Minds, that they aim at too great Things for themſelves; and will not vouchſafe to marry, unleſs it be to ſuch as are above them; either more worthy in their Perſons, or of much better Circumſtances than themſelves: Then indeed it's no Wonder if ſuch Perſons, of ſuch high Minds, or of ſuch bad Characters, or of ſuch ill Tempers, or of ſuch ſtrange Manners, can neither marry well, nor live well without it; but fall into Temptation, and the Snare of the Devil; and into divers fooliſh, and hurtful Luſts; and ſo, under the Wrath, and Judgment of God. For,

as

as the Text ſays, *Whoremongers, and Adulterers, God will judge.* SERM. III.

Tho' even ſuch diſorderly, and wicked Perſons may alſo marry after their Kind; for there are ſcarce any Perſons ſo wicked, but there are ſome others as ill; by which Means, the very worſt People of all may be marry'd to ſuch as themſelves; but then, they can't much expect to live happily together, unleſs they can reform one another, and leave off their evil Ways; which, indeed, is ſometimes the good Effect of marrying. But except ſuch diſorderly Perſons as theſe, all others may marry well, if they be mindful. As it greatly behoves all ſo to be, in ſuch a grand Concern of Life; eſpecially they that would live innocently, and are ſometimes in Danger of doing otherwiſe, while they live ſingly; to all ſuch is the Marriage-State moſt of all recommended. As it's upon this Account, that the Apoſtle here in the Text ſpeaks ſo much in Honour of Marriage, in Oppoſition to that wicked, and woful Way of living in Whoredom, and Adultery: Saying, *Marriage is honourable*

in

SERM. III. *in all, and the Bed undefil'd; but Whoremongers, and Adulterers, God will judge.*

Which Words of the Text I will treat of, as well as I can, in ſuch a Way, as may be of moſt Uſe to us all; both to thoſe that are marry'd, and to thoſe that are not; both to thoſe that hope in Time to enter into the marry'd State, and to thoſe that have no Thought of it; and both to thoſe that refrain from it either out of a good, or out of an evil Principle. I ſhall alſo ſay ſomething concerning the tender Offspring of Marriage, both of Children and Youth; of the great Care that ought to be taken of them, that they be virtuouſly brought up, and at length prudently put out to ſuch Buſineſs, or ſettled in ſuch a Way, as they may live well all their Life. All which Things, ariſing from this Doctrine of the Text, do make it a proper, and profitable Subject to be treated of.

In which are theſe two Things to be conſider'd.

Firſt,

SERM. III.

First, The Honour, and Innocency of a married State; how that *Marriage is honourable in all, and the Bed undefil'd.*

Secondly, The Judgments of God againſt Sinners, particularly, thoſe that are vicious, and lewd; that *Whoremongers, and Adulterers, God will judge.*

First, I am to ſhew the Honour, and Innocency of a married State; how that *Marriage is honourable, and the Bed undefil'd.*

Now, Marriage is honourable in ſeveral Reſpects, eſpecially in theſe four. Firſt, For the Author of it; it being ordain'd of God. Secondly, For the Neceſſity, and Uſefulneſs of it, towards the Support, and Comfort of Mankind. Thirdly, For the Peaceableneſs of it; it being the very Bond of Peace, and Love. And, Fourthly, For the Purity, and Innocency of it; *the Marriage Bed being undefil'd.* I will endeavour to ſhew the Honour of Marriage in all theſe

SERM. III. theſe Reſpects; but only in the two firſt of them in this Diſcourſe.

And, Firſt, I am to ſhew, that *Marriage is honourable for the Author of it*; it being, by the great Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God, appointed in the Beginning of the World, for the Benefit of Mankind. For as God at the firſt ſaw, that it was not fit, or good for Man, that he ſhould live alone, but that he ſhould have an Help meet for him; ſo the firſt Order, that God made among Men, was that of Marriage; that the firſt Man and Woman ſhould be join'd together, as Man and Wife; or, as our bleſſed Saviour expreſſeth it, that *they twain ſhould be one Fleſh*, Mat. xix. 5, 6.

And in this Reſpect, that Marriage was of ſuch an honourable, or high, and divine Appointment, our bleſſed Saviour, when he was upon Earth, was pleas'd to be preſent upon ſuch an Occaſion; and moreover, thought fit to do the firſt Miracle, that he wrought, at a Marriage Feaſt,

Feaſt, by turning a great deal of Water into Wine, for the Entertainment of the Gueſts; as it were in Approbation, and Honour, of the holy State of Matrimony. And upon the ſame Account, moſt wiſe Men, in all Ages, have always ſpoken well of Marriage, as a very prudent, and good Inſtitution. And accordingly, all the civiliz'd Nations in the World have always accounted, and eſtabliſh'd, the State of Marriage, as a moſt ſacred, inviolable, and honourable State among Men. And in Conſideration of the many great Benefits flowing from it, not only to the married Perſons themſelves, but alſo to the Publick; therefore moſt Countries have not only granted the Precedency to married Perſons before others, but alſo have honour'd it with many Honours, Privileges, and Advantages; the better to encourage, and promote it among their People; to whom it was uſually reckon'd a Diſadvantage, or a Calamity, to be kept from marrying. As we read of the People of *Iſrael*, that, at one Time, they were in ſuch a calamitous Condition, that there was little heard among them, but Weeping, and

SERM. III.

SERM. III. Mourning; however, no marrying, or giving in Marriage. Which the Pſalmiſt mentions, as one of the greateſt Afflictions, or Judgments, that befel them at that Time. For among the reſt of their ſad Calamities, he ſays that, *Their Maidens were not given in Marriage*, Pſalm lxxviii. 63. Yea, when God was pleas'd ſometimes to threaten wicked People, that he would ſeverely puniſh them, if they would not turn from their Iniquities; he repreſents the Grievouſneſs of the Affliction, that he would ſend upon them for their Wickedneſs, by the ſad Want of Marriages among them. As he does by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, ſaying, *Thus ſaith the Lord, I will cauſe to ceaſe from the Cities of* Judah, *and from the Streets of* Jeruſalem, *the Voice of Mirth, and the Voice of Gladneſs; the Voice of the Bridegroom, and the Voice of the Bride; for the Land ſhall be deſolate*, Jer. vii. 34. And ſo, on the contrary, when God was pleas'd to deliver his People again out of Captivity, and Miſery; then their Joy, and Happineſs, is deſcrib'd by that of the Marriages, that ſhould be again among them. As God ſpeaketh

in

in another Place by the ſame Prophet, ſaying, *There ſhall be heard again in this Place, the Voice of Joy, and the Voice of Gladneſs; the Voice of the Bridegroom, and the Voice of the Bride; and the Voice of them that ſhall ſay, Praiſe the Lord of Hoſts; for the Lord is good, and his Mercy endureth for ever*, Jer. xxxiii. 10, 11. SERM. III.

And thus the Marriage-State repreſenting the chiefeſt Happineſs upon Earth, and bringing the greateſt Benefit to Mankind, is highly eſteem'd of by moſt People, and carefully promoted by all Nations; and accordingly, has always been very earneſtly deſir'd, and embrac'd, by all Conditions, and Degrees of Men in the World; and ſo, *is made honourable by all.*

But that, which makes it the moſt honourable of all, is, becauſe it is approv'd of God, whoſe own Ordinance it is; and who hath thereby ſtamp'd his Authority, and Honour upon it. And therefore, as thoſe married Perſons, whom God hath join'd together, no Man ought to put aſunder; ſo that holy State of Marriage, which

SERM. III. God hath been pleas'd to honour with his own Inſtitution, no Man ought to deſpiſe, or open his Mouth againſt.

Secondly, Marriage is alſo honourable for the Neceſſity, and Uſefulneſs of it, toward the Increaſe, and Welfare of Mankind. As we may obſerve from the Scripture Account of the Creation of the World, that as Marriage was the one Thing moſt neceſſary toward the repleniſhing, or peopling the World; ſo the firſt Bleſſing, that God was pleas'd to beſtow on Mankind, was by way of Marriage; that they ſhould increaſe, and propagate their Kind. As it is written, that *God created Man in his own Image, in the Image of God created he him, Male and Female created he them. And God bleſſed them, and God ſaid unto them; Be fruitful, and multiply, and repleniſh the Earth,* Gen. i. 27, 28. And upon this Account, toward the Being and the Well-being of Mankind, Marriage may be truly ſaid to be honourable; as the moſt neceſſary and uſeful, as the moſt natural and innocent, yea, as the wiſeſt and beſt Order, that could have been made in the World,

World, for the Benefit of Mankind. And that, not only for the Propagation of them, but alſo for the Propagating of Religion, and Virtue along with them. For Marriage is the beſt Way, that could be devis'd, to eſtabliſh the World upon a good Foundation; to bring Families to be rightly order'd, and Children to be well educated, and to propagate Godlineſs to Poſterity; or, as the Prophet argueth, *to ſeek*, or propagate, *a* * *godly Seed*, by marrying, and keeping the Marriage-Covenant inviolable. Which good Things can't be expected from the evil Ways of Whoredom, and Adultery; no, nor from the ſtrange Ways of Polygamy; but rather, on the contrary, much Ungodlineſs, and Unhappineſs. SERM. III.

For if Men were ſuffer'd to have Children at their Deſire, without marrying; and were let looſe to their Luſts, to live promiſcuouſly together like brute Beaſts; then there would be a ſhameful Offſpring, and a ſinful Generation; then the World would be all in Confuſion, and would be

* Malachi ii. 14, 15.

SERM. III. ſhortly brought to Deſtruction. Or, what is almoſt as ill, if Men were left to their Liberty, to have as many Wives as they would, and to turn them off when they pleas'd, and get others in their Stead, this would breed Abundance of ill Blood; even innumerable and endleſs Jealouſies, Hatreds, and Quarrels, if not many barbarous Murders. Yea, this would breed abundance of ill begotten, and ill educated Children; who had better never be born, than to be born, and brought up, after ſuch a ſad Manner. Such Children, I ſay, had better never be born, than to be born to Miſery, as they moſt likely are. For by being conceived in Sin and born in Iniquity, and brought up in Rudeneſs, and Wickedneſs, without any Care taken of them, ſcarce as to their Bodies, and much leſs as to their Souls; but turned looſe into the wide and wicked World, with little or no Education; without any Principles of Religion, or Virtue, inſtill'd into them, they muſt needs be in great Danger of being ruin'd; of taking to evil Courſes, and ſo, of bringing themſelves to Poverty, and Shame; and their Souls to Deſtruction

ſtruction at laſt. And therefore in com- SERM. III.
pariſon of theſe, and ſuch like wicked Ways of Licentiouſneſs, Marriage is much to be preferr'd, and honour'd, as the wiſeſt, and beſt Ordinance in the World; that is, when *one Man, and one Woman, are ſolely join'd together; and engag'd, to hold them faſt by one another, ſo long as they both ſhall live.* For thereby they have an equal Right, and Intereſt in one another's Perſons, and Affections; they are alſo, by their Marriage-Duty, mutually oblig'd, and are generally of themſelves willingly inclin'd, to promote one another's Welfare, and Happineſs; and they are both of them jointly concern'd, both by Nature and Religion, to take good Care of their Children; and that, not only to clothe and feed them, but alſo to give them as good an Education, as they can. And this is one great Reaſon, which the Common Prayer Book, in the Office of Matrimony, ſays, that *Marriage was ordain'd* for; that is, *For the Procreation of Children, to be brought up in the Nurture, and Admonition of the Lord, and to the Praiſe of his holy Name.*

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And for this very Reaſon, Marriage is very honourable; not only, as it is the only lawful Way of bringing Children into the World; but alſo, as it is the moſt likely Way of having them well brought up; both as to their Bodies, with all neceſſary and convenient Things; and alſo as to their Souls, with a virtuous and chriſtian Education: Which may make them always happy; not only ſo long as they live in this World, but alſo for ever hereafter in Heaven.

And therefore, how honourable is the married State! Seeing that it is the bleſſed Means, under God, of furniſhing the World with Inhabitants, even with Lords, and Maſters; and of ſupplying the Church of Chriſt with Members, with holy and innocent ones; and of ſending Saints, and Angels, into Heaven at laſt. For Man, that is born of a Woman, is made Lord, and Maſter of all the Creatures upon Earth; and even now, is not much below the very Angels in Heaven. As the holy Scriptures aſſure us, ſaying, *Lord, what is Man, that thou*

thou art mindful of him, and the Son of Man, that thou viſiteſt him? For thou haſt made him a little lower than the Angels, and haſt crowned him with Glory, and Honour; thou madeſt him to have Dominion over the Works of thy Hands, thou haſt put all Things in Subjection under his Feet; all Sheep, and Oxen, and the Beaſts of the Field, &c. Pſalm viii. 4—9. SERM. III.

And if this be the Honour of Mankind in general, to be Lords, and Maſters, of the whole Earth; then, ſurely, all thoſe that are good, that are virtuous and religious, when they come to die, and to riſe again at the laſt Day, they ſhall ſurely be very honourable, and glorious. For then, ſays our Bleſſed Saviour, *The Righteous ſhall ſhine forth as the Sun, in the Kingdom of their Father*, Matt. xiii. 43. Yea, ſays our Bleſſed Saviour, in another Place; *But they*, that is, the Righteous; *they*, ſays he, *which ſhall be accounted worthy to obtain the World to come, and the Reſurrection from the Dead, they can't die any more; for they are equal unto the Angels, and are the Children*

SERM. III. *dren of God, being the Children of the Resurrection*, Luke xx. 35, 36.

And therefore, I ſay, how honourable is the married State! Seeing that, by the good Will and Bleſſing of God, it is the appointed Means, or Way, to ſo much Honour, and Happineſs; in not only raiſing up Children to the married Perſons themſelves, but alſo Sons unto God, Brethren unto Chriſt, Heirs unto Heaven, and Equals unto the Angels. All which being the bleſſed, and glorious Effects, or Fruits of Marriage, do prove this high Commendation of it, in the Text, to be very true; that *Marriage is honourable in all.*

Marriage is alſo honourable upon two other Accounts, that is, for the Peaceableneſs of it; it being the very Bond of Peace, and Love: And likewiſe for the Innocency of it; *The Marriage-Bed being undefil'd.* Which two other good Things, in favour of Marriage, I ſhall particularly treat of in the next Diſcourſe; and ſhall now only make an Application of what hath been ſaid.

Now,

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Now, as God hath been pleas'd to appoint this holy Ordinance of Marriage, to be ſo ſtrictly obſerv'd among Men; and to beſtow ſo many Bleſſings upon it, eſpecially that of the Procreation of Children, and the great Happineſs attending them, if they be good; then it is the Duty of thoſe that are married, to be very careful of themſelves, and of their Children. For by having a godly Care of your Children, by entering them into a religious State by Baptiſm, and by training them up afterwards in the Ways of Virtue, and according to the perfect Rules of Chriſtianity; they ſhall, by the Grace and Mercy of God, be made Members of Chriſt, and Children of God, and Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven.

This is the great Honour, and Happineſs, accruing to you by Marriage; that you are thereby made capable of doing ſo much Good to the World, to yourſelves, and to your Children. For by keeping a watchful and tender Eye over them, while they are young, and under your Care; by

SERM. III. ſetting them a good Example in all Things, by correcting and amending the Faults which you find in them, and by giving ſuch prudent and pious Inſtructions, upon all Occaſions, as may ſtick by them, and do them good, ſo long as they live; and when they go from you, by placing them with good Maſters, ſuch as are of good Report, and great Temperance, and ſtrict Truth and Honeſty; and alſo, if you can, with ſuch as make an open Profeſſion of Religion; ſuch, I mean, as make Conſcience of performing their Duty to God, both publickly and privately, both at Church and in their own Family; that your Children may thereby learn no evil Ways, but only ſuch as are good; and may thereby be brought, not only to practiſe, but alſo to delight in all the Ways of Godlineſs and Honeſty: And withal, by taking care to put out your Children to neceſſary and uſeful Callings; ſuch as they may go about with a good Conſcience, and with great Chearfulneſs; and ſuch as they may ſafely commit to God, and look for his Bleſſing upon; by theſe Means, with the Bleſſing of God upon them, your Children

dren will be in the faireſt Way of proſper- SERM.
ing; both of doing well for themſelves, III.
and alſo of doing Good in their Genera-
tion. Or if they don't grow rich, and
great; yet if they do but prove wiſe and
good, they will always have ſomething
within their own Breaſts to comfort them;
and will always be belov'd of Men, and
bleſs'd of God. Or if they ſhould be ha-
ted, and deſpis'd, of ſome that are wick-
ed; yet they will be always reſpected of
thoſe that are good, and will be ſure of
the Favour and Bleſſing of God, which is
the beſt of all. Or if they ſhould come
to be poor, and low in the World; yet if
they be but rich in Grace, they ſhall be
high enough hereafter; even ſo high, as to
be equal to the Angels in Heaven. And
ſo, you will count it your greateſt Honour,
and Happineſs, that you were marry'd,
and that you have ſo much Comfort in
your Children. For, in this Reſpect, it
may well be ſaid for the Encouragement,
and Honour of Marriage, as it is by the
Pſalmiſt, who cries out in Admiration of
the Greatneſs of the Bleſſing, ſaying, *Lo,*
Children are an Heritage of the Lord, and
the

SERM. III. *the Fruit of the Womb is his Reward: As Arrows are in the Hand of a mighty Man, ſo are Children of the Youth. Happy is the Man that hath his Quiver full of them,* Pſalm cxxvii. 3, 4, 5. Yea, this is ſo great a Bleſſing, that it is chiefly promis'd to thoſe that are good; as it is ſaid, in the next Pſalm, that, *Bleſſed is every one that feareth the Lord, and that walketh in his Ways; for thou ſhalt eat the Labour of thine Hands, happy ſhalt thou be, and it ſhall be well with thee. Thy Wife ſhall be as the fruitful Vine, by the Sides of thine Houſe; and thy Children like Olive-Plants, round about thy Table. Behold, thus ſhall the Man be bleſſed, that feareth the Lord,* Pſalm cxxviii. 1—5.

So that, it is thoſe that are good, and fear the Lord, that do chiefly inherit this Bleſſing. For tho' ſome others, indeed, that are wicked, may have as many, or more Children, perhaps, than the Righteous; yet, they are not uſually ſo bleſſed in them. Becauſe the Children do often take after their wicked Parents, and are given to evil Ways; whereby they bring them-

themſelves moſt commonly to Ruin, and their Parents to Shame and Trouble, and their gray Hairs with Sorrow to the Grave. Yea further, tho' the Children of thoſe that are wicked, or even the Children of Fornication, may ſometimes thrive as well in the World, as thoſe of the Righteous; yet, if they don't prove better than their Parents, and follow that which is good, ſo as to be hopeful to do well in the World to come; it is but ſmall Comfort, or Satisfaction, to thoſe that begot them. For as Children, that are begotten in Marriage, and brought up in the Knowledge and Fear of God, are generally the greateſt Comfort to their Parents, that can be; ſo, on the contrary, thoſe Children, that are either *baſely begotten, in Whoredom and Adultery*, or badly brought up in Idleneſs, or Extravagance; inſtead of any Comfort, they are rather a Shame, and a Grief to their Parents, ſo long as they live. Which, one would think, ſhould be Warning enough to all that have any Conſideration in them, not to bring Children into the World after a ſinful, and ſhameful Way; and likewiſe to thoſe that have Children lawfully

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SERM. III. lawfully begotten, to be careful in training them up after a virtuous, and godly Manner. For according as you bring up your Children, either well or ill; they will moſt probably prove, either good or bad, either happy or miſerable. Becauſe, if you ſet before your Children an ill Example of diſhoneſt, or diſorderly, or ungodly living; or if you neglect them, and leave them to themſelves, to follow their own wild, and vain Imaginations; or if you humour them, and encourage them, in their Follies, and Vanities; it is moſt likely, that they will fall into bad Company, and take to wicked Ways; which will be a great Vexation to you, fit to conſume your Eyes, and to grieve, and break your Heart: As the *Sons of* Eli did to him, for his bearing too much with them in their Wickedneſs, 1 *Sam.* ii. 33.

But, on the other hand, if you train up your Children in the Way that they ſhould go, they will not eaſily depart from it; and moreover, the Grace and Bleſſing of God will not be wanting to them; and ſo, to your unſpeakable Joy and Comfort, they may

may do well, both in this World and the World to come. And they will alſo teach their Children after them, to do the ſame; and then, what a Comfort will it be to you, when you come to die, to leave your Children behind you in a hopeful Way of being happy; eſpecially, what a Comfort will it be to you, when you come to riſe again from the Dead, to meet your Children, and your Childrens Children in Heaven; and there to enjoy them, and to be happy with them, for ever and ever! Amen. SERM. III.

SERMON IV.

Directions about Marrying.

HEB. xiii. 4.

Marriage is honourable in all, and the Bed undefiled.

SERM. IV.

THIS Text ſpeaking ſo much in Praiſe of *Marriage*, in ſaying, that it *is honourable in all*; I therefore propos'd, in the laſt Diſcourſe, to ſhew how very honourable it is, and what alſo it is honourable for. As,

Firſt, That *Marriage is honourable, as it is the Ordinance of God, and which he hath promis'd his Bleſſing upon*; eſpecially, to thoſe that behave themſelves well in it; that

that live virtuouſly, and religiouſly, and carry themſelves well to one another. SERM. IV.

Secondly, That *Marriage is alſo honourable for the Neceſſity, and Uſefulneſs of it, towards the Increaſe and Welfare of Mankind*; it being the only lawful Way of bringing Children into the World, and alſo the moſt likely Way of having them well brought up; both with all Things neceſſary to the Body, and likewiſe with all Things profitable to the Soul; and thereby, the beſt Way to their Well-doing, both as to this World and the next: Which, as it is the greateſt Bleſſing to the Children, ſo it is no leſs a Comfort to the Parents, and a Benefit to the Publick, and alſo well-pleaſing to God; and all this proceeding from, and tending to the Honour of Marriage.

I will now alſo endeavour to ſhew, in the third Place, another Thing, which *Marriage is honourable for*, and that is, for *the Peaceableneſs of it; it being the very Bond of Peace, and Love.* For *Marriage is a Bond of Love* cloſer, and ſtronger, than

SERM. IV. that of any other Friends, or Relations; whether Parents, or Children, or Brethren, or Sisters: And so, indeed, it ought to be, by the Ordinance, or Law of God.

For by the Marriage-Covenant, made of God at the Beginning, and expresly mention'd by our Blessed Saviour, the married Couple ought to love one another better, than any other Persons whatsoever; yea, should rather forget, and forsake all others, even the best Friends, and the neareſt Relations, than leave one another. For, says our Blessed Saviour, *For this Cause shall a Man leave his Father, and Mother, and cleave unto his Wife; and they twain shall be one Flesh: So then, they are no more twain, but one Flesh*, Mark x. 8, 9.

Those that are considerately join'd together in Marriage, it does so intirely unite them in their Persons, and in their Hearts, that they are no more two, but one: Even as it was in the Beginning, the Man and the Woman being all one; the Woman being at first taken out of the Man, and by the Bond of Marriage made one again;

one

one Fleſh, and one Heart. Which does ſo faſt join them together in Union and Love, that nothing ſhould part them but Death: And that nothing ſhould be like their Love for one another; which ſhould be ſo great, ſo true, and ſo ſtedfaſt, as to be beyond the Love of any others; even next unto, or like the perfect Love of our Bleſſed Saviour Chriſt for us. For ſuch is the firm Love, and Union, made by Marriage, that, above all Things, it has the Honour to repreſent the greateſt of all Loves; that is, the Love of Chriſt to his Spouſe, the Church; which is the Pattern of Love, that ought to be between every married Pair. For, ſays the Apoſtle, *Huſbands love your Wives, even as Chriſt alſo loved the Church, and gave himſelf for it. Even ſo let every one of you in particular, ſo love his Wife, even as himſelf*, Epheſ. v. 25, and 33d Verſe. SERM. IV.

So that Marriage is very honourable for this, that by it is ſignified the myſtical Union between Chriſt and his Church; thereby implying, that no Love upon Earth is like that of thoſe that are married; be-

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tween whom ſhould be uninterrupted Love, Peace, and Quietneſs. For tho' many Things, indeed, may frequently fall out, offering to diſturb it; yet they do but the more increaſe, and ſtrengthen the true Love, and Union, of thoſe that are happily married. For, after all, they have the Satisfaction of knowing it within themſelves, and of ſeeing it in each other, that they have, notwithſtanding ſome accidental Differences, a real Love for one another; which they do by all Means cultivate, and improve, by being more careful for the future, to ſhun all Occaſions of Strife; and by ſtudying all the Ways of obliging, and pleaſing one another. As St. *Paul* mentions this, as a noted, or common Thing, among thoſe that are married, ſo to love one another, that their chief Care ſeems to be, how to pleaſe one another. For, ſays he, *The Man that is married careth for the Things of the World, how he may pleaſe his Wife; and the Wife, how ſhe may pleaſe her Huſband*, 1 Cor. vii. 33, 34. And if this be their chief Care commonly, then much more it is, or ſhould be, after any Miſunderſtanding, or Difference

Difference between them; that then they should, and those that are wise always do, strive more than ordinary, which should be the most complying, and obliging; that they may be the sooner reconcil'd together, and their Love for one another be the more confirm'd ever after. And thus, their very Differences are made a Means of renewing, and confirming their Love; by putting them upon giving fresh Assurances of the Sincerity of it, and of their earnest Desire, and of their greater Care for the future, to preserve it. And so their Love is renew'd, and improv'd, even by their Differences; as it is by all other Things, that do happen unto them. For their worldly Successes, and Advantages, are doubled, by their being married; because they are both Partakers of the Joy, which also is the greater to each of them, to see how joyful it is to the other. As, on the contrary, all their Troubles are greatly lessen'd by each bearing a Part, and easing the other of it; and doing their Endeavour to support, and comfort, one another under their Troubles. Yea, their own Infirmities, and Failings of either, or of both of them, do but

SERM. IV.

SERM. IV. make them to pity, and to help each other the more; and the more desirous also to advise, instruct, and improve one another. And then, as for all Hatreds, Revilings, and Abuses, of any others against them, they do only make them hold themselves faster together, and to love one another the better; as if the twofold Cord of Love, of those that are well married, could not easily be broken.

But, if all Marriages are not so honourable and happy, for Love and for Peace, for Joy and for Comfort; it is because they were not well made at first; either because they were made between improper and unsuitable Persons, of different Ages, or Circumstances, or Tempers, or Inclinations; for when any two Persons so greatly differing, in those or in some other Things, are so unequally yok'd together, it is no Wonder, if they be unhappy in one another.

Or if there be any Want of Love, and Peace, in some Marriages, it is because they were undertaken rashly, and unadvisedly,

viſedly, by very imprudent Perſons in their Youth; not only without the Advice, and Conſent, of their wiſeſt and beſt Friends; but alſo without due Conſideration in themſelves, of what they were going about. For if thoſe that are young will marry, without conſidering what they do; it is no Wonder, if they meet with ſuch Troubles afterwards, as they did not before think of. SERM. IV.

Or if the Love of ſome married Perſons fail, it is becauſe they married at firſt for ſome mean, and unworthy Ends; either admiring the Wit, or doting on the Beauty, or eſteeming one another for their Worth, or Value in Money; or perhaps, put upon it by their Parents, which is very ill done of them. For as it is a very ill Thing in Parents, to hinder their Children from marrying at all, becauſe they are not willing to part with their Money, or becauſe they can't marry them ſo rich, or ſome other Way ſo well as to the World, as they would; ſo, on the other hand, it is very imprudent, if not very wicked, in Parents to force, or to perſuade their Children to marry, contrary to their own Will

and

SERM. IV. and Inclinations, to ſuch diſagreeable Perſons, or of ſuch an unſuitable Age or Humour, as they can't love, and conſequently can never be happy with. Now when any Perſons, either thro' their Parents Fault or their own Folly, do marry chiefly either for Money, Wit, or Beauty, or for ſuch like worldly and carnal Conſiderations, it is no Wonder, if they meet with great Diſappointments and Troubles, inſtead of Love, and Happineſs in their married State.

It's no Wonder, I ſay, if thoſe Marriages are often ſhameful inſtead of honourable, and miſerable inſtead of happy, which are made upon an indiſcreet, and not a right Love. A right Love, I mean, of ſuch good Qualities in the Perſons to be married, as are really lovely, deſirable, and praiſe-worthy. As, when they are prudent and careful in their Buſineſs, and manage their Affairs with Diſcretion; and when they are ſober, and regular, and temperate in all Things; and when they are of a patient, meek, and quiet Spirit; which in the Sight of God, and alſo of

Men, is of great Price: And when they are of a modeſt, humble, and courteous Behaviour; and eſpecially, when they are virtuouſly and piouſly inclin'd, and given to good Works. Now to love, and to marry ſuch a one; ſuch as is of a ſuitable Age, Circumſtance, and Temper; and withal ſuch a one as is diſcreet, virtuous, and good; *this is the right Love, and the right honourable Chriſtian Marriage, and the only right Way of marrying in the Lord, which St.* Paul *means*, 1 Cor. vii. 39. That is, to marry with Deliberation and Diſcretion, according to the known Rules of Reaſon, and Religion; and to marry ſuch as yourſelves; ſuch, I mean, as are of an agreeable Temper, and that have a Senſe of Goodneſs, and the Fear of God in them; together with a good Degree of Prudence. SERM. IV.

For when two prudent Perſons are married to one another; if there be any Faults, or Failings between them, as who is there without? Yet, when two prudent Perſons are married to one another, if they have either, or both of them any Faults, they will,

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will, by their own Conſideration, together with the Grace of God aſſiſting them, they will ſoon find them out, and forſake them. Or if they have any Faults, their Love to one another will cover them, or overlook them, or make the beſt Uſe, and Conſtruction, that they can of them. Or if they have any Faults, by the tender Advice, and Perſuaſions of one another, they will eaſily amend them; each of them ſtriving to amend themſelves, and to amend one another.

And thus, the matrimonial Love, of thoſe that are prudent and pious, will never fail; but they will with great Goodneſs and Meekneſs of Wiſdom, bear with one another in their Failings, and forgive one another their Offences; and, to the utmoſt of their Power, they will aſſiſt, and comfort one another in their Troubles; and, to the beſt of their Knowledge, they will adviſe, inſtruct, and edify one another, in Things relating to the common Salvation. And finally, in all Things they will promote, and provoke one another to Love, and to good Works. For all which good

Things

Things Marriage is much to be commended, and honoured, for being ſuch a perfect Bond of Love, and Peace, and Happineſs. SERM. IV.

But there is yet another Thing, which Marriage is honourable for; which we are now, under the fourth Head, to conſider; and that is, for the Purity, and Innocency of it: *The Marriage-Bed being undefiled.*

Marriage is ſuch an undefiled, and innocent State, that it was ordain'd for Man at the Beginning in Paradiſe, even before the Fall: Before any Lewdneſs, or any other Wickedneſs was got into the World; when they knew no Harm, when they knew no Shame, when they knew no Sin. In this State of Man's Innocency, was Marriage firſt ordain'd, as a pure and perfect State. And even now, ſince the Fall, that the World is grown ſo corrupt; yet the Marriage-State, as it is the moſt uſeful, ſo it is the moſt innocent, and inoffenſive of all others. But eſpecially, in Compariſon of the corrupt Ways of Whoredom and Adultery, the Marriage-Bed is

SERM. IV. even pure, and undefil'd. Yea, it is ſo innocent, that it was ordain'd, and is here recommended to us, as a Remedy againſt Sin; eſpecially againſt the heinous Sins of Laſciviouſneſs, and Luſtfulneſs. That if any one finds himſelf under ſtronger Temptations thereunto, than he can well bear, he may get married; and ſo keep himſelf honeſt, and innocent, and undefil'd. And this is another great Reaſon, which our Common-Prayer Book, in the Office for Marriage, ſays, that *Marriage was ordain'd* for, *viz. as a Remedy againſt Sin, and to avoid Fornication; that ſuch Perſons, as have not the Gift of Continency, might marry; and keep themſelves undefil'd Members of Chriſt's Church.* And for the ſame Reaſon it is, that St. *Paul* does here ſo much commend it, as an honourable and innocent State; in Compariſon of the unclean, and abominable Life of Whoremongers, and Adulterers.

Whereas otherwiſe, St. *Paul* would rather have advis'd ſome Perſons to remain unmarried, as he himſelf did; ſuch Perſons, I mean, as were under no Neceſſity, or

or ſtrong Temptation to the contrary; but could govern themſelves, and keep their Bodies in Temperance, Soberneſs, and Chaſtity; ſuch Perſons he always ſaid did well, yea rather better, than if they married. For ſays he, *That Man, that ſtandeth ſtedfaſt in his Heart, having no Neceſſity; but hath Power over his own Will, and hath ſo decreed in his Heart, that he will not marry, he doth well; yea better,* ſays he, *than if he married,* 1 Cor. vii. 37, 38. SERM. IV.

Now, St. *Paul*'s Reaſon for recommending a ſingle Life to ſome was, not only *becauſe of the preſent Diſtreſs,* as he calls it; that is, the great Perſecution of Chriſtians, that was in thoſe Days, 1 *Cor.* vii. 26. But alſo becauſe he found, that a ſingle Life was much the ſafeſt, the eaſieſt, and the quieteſt Way of living; freeſt from the Cares, and Troubles of this World; and wherein a Man has his Time, and his Heart, moſt to himſelf; and is moſt at Liberty to do Good, and to ſerve the Lord; much more than thoſe that are married. For, ſays he, *The Man, that is unmarried,*

careth

SERM. IV. *careth for the Things that belongeth unto the Lord, how he may pleaſe the Lord. But he that is married, careth for the Things of the World, how he may pleaſe his Wife,* 1 Cor. vii. 32, 33.

But, tho' St. *Paul* does thus recommend a ſingle Life, to all thoſe that would live without too much worldly Carefulneſs; and that deſire to ſerve the Lord with the leaſt Diſtraction of Mind, or with the greateſt Compoſure, Calmneſs, and Chearfulneſs, as he did; yet, becauſe that all People could not do alike; therefore as to thoſe that could not ſo eaſily refrain, and guide themſelves, he adviſes them to marry; rather than to come under the Temptation, or the Sin, of Fornication. For, ſays he, *Nevertheleſs, to avoid Fornication, let every Man have his own Wife; and every Woman her own Huſband,* 1 Cor. vii. 2.

And thus the Apoſtle, tho' he was much for a ſingle Life himſelf, yet, for ſuch as were not perfect Maſters of themſelves, that could not keep their Bodies in Subjection, ſo well as he, he would have them

to

to marry; leſt they ſhould be inticed, by their own Hearts Luſts, into the baſe Sins of Uncleanneſs, of Whoredom, and Adultery; which are uſually attended with a great deal of Shame and Harm, both to a Man's Soul and Body. For, as the Apoſtle ſays, *thoſe that are given to the Sins of Uncleanneſs, or Luſtfulneſs, diſhonour*, that is, by defiling, *their own Bodies*, Rom. i. 24. So that, in Compariſon of all ſuch ſhameful Sins, *Marriage may well be ſaid to be honourable, and the Bed undefiled*; becauſe by it, all conſiderate Chriſtians may timely prevent themſelves from running into ſuch ſinful, and ſhameful Courſes; and may ſo well, as the Apoſtle ſays, *poſſeſs their Bodies in Sanctification, and Honour; and not in the Luſts of Concupiſcence, as the* Gentiles *which know not God*, 1 Theſſ. iv. 4. SERM. IV.

And therefore, as it is a great Virtue, Honour, and Happineſs, to keep ourſelves free from Fornication, and the Sins of Uncleanneſs; ſo *Marriage is truly honourable, innocent, and undefiled*, in this Reſpect; as it is a good Means to prevent a Man from falling into ſuch Sins, which

SERM. IV. would bring him into ſo much Diſhonour, and Danger of Deſtruction. For *Whoremongers, and Adulterers, God will judge.* And ſurely the Sin of ſuch People muſt be very great, and their Condition very bad, who, by their lewd and vicious Lives, make themſelves liable to the Wrath, and Judgment of God: As I ſhall endeavour to ſhew, in the following Diſcourſes, from the latter Part of the Verſe. And, for the preſent, only deſire, that the following Application may be made from the foregoing Conſiderations, concerning this common Duty and great Concern of Life, a married State. And that is,

That if there be ſo much Honour and Innocency in Marriage, then we ought all to be very careful, to do nothing contrary thereunto; eſpecially thoſe that are married ought to do their utmoſt, to preſerve the Honour of their Matrimonial State; by keeping the Bed undefiled and inviolated; by living in an honeſt and chaſte Converſation, coupled with Fear; with a Fear of doing amiſs, of offending God, and wronging one another: And alſo by preſerving

preſerving your Love for one another entire and undiſturb'd, and beyond the Power of any Thing in the World to break; that as God hath join'd your Perſons together in Marriage, ſo nothing may be able to ſeparate your Hearts aſunder: And withal by having a continual, and Chriſtian Care of your Children; that you may have the Honour of making them the Children of the moſt high God, and Heirs of his everlaſting Kingdom; and ſo, of making both yourſelves, and your Children happy indeed. SERM. IV.

And likewiſe, as for all thoſe, that intend to take this holy and honourable State of Marriage upon them; they ought to have ſo much Reſpect and Conſideration for it, as to take heed, that they run not headlong thereunto. *As our Church's Marriage-Office well adviſes them, that they ſhould not go about it unadviſedly, lightly, or wantonly; but, ſhould undertake it reverently, diſcreetly, and ſoberly, and in the Fear of God*; conſidering well with themſelves, what a great Concern Marriage is; and therefore, that they ought to uſe their own

SERM. IV. utmoſt Care about it, and alſo to take the Advice of their Friends, eſpecially of their Parents in it; and, above all, ought to ſeek and pray unto God for his Direction, and Bleſſing; that their Marriage may be honourable and happy unto them.

And finally, as for thoſe who refrain from Marriage, they alſo ought to do it for ſome pious, or prudent, and not for any baſe, or wicked End. As, not out of mere Contradiction, and Diſparagement of Marriage itſelf; which is an Ordinance of God, and therefore, for any one to lead a ſingle Life, and alſo in a diſorderly Way, without any Regard to that Law of God, but rather in Oppoſition, and Deſpite, to the married State; and both to act and ſpeak contemptuouſly of it, this would be a wicked Thing, and an evil Principle indeed. For the Apoſtle calls *a forbidding to marry, even a Doctrine of Devils*, 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3. Eſpecially, it would be an evil Principle indeed for any Men, as it's to be fear'd that many do, to refrain from marrying chiefly out of a looſe, and lewd Principle; that they may be

be more at Liberty to indulge themſelves in the evil Deſires of their Hearts, and to *walk in the Luſts of Concupiſcence, as the* Gentiles *which know not God*, 1 Theſſ. iv. 5. SERM. IV.

But rather, all thoſe that are unmarried ought to walk the more circumſpectly, and unblameably, in all Reverence and godly Fear; cautiouſly avoiding all ſuch enticing Things, and evil Communications, as would corrupt their good Manners, and tempt them to do wickedly; that ſo, they may keep themſelves not only diſengag'd, but alſo unſpotted from the World. And as they are not yet ſo deeply plung'd, as thoſe that are married, into the diſtracting Cares of this Life; ſo, they ought to be the more mindful of the Things of another World; how they may pleaſe the Lord, and ſave their own Souls.

Which one main, and neceſſary Thing ought to be the chief Concern, and the daily Prayer of us all; that God would be pleas'd to put us into ſuch a Way of living, as is moſt pleaſing in his Sight. And that

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he would enable us to ſerve him aright in the ſeveral Conditions, and Callings, wherein he hath plac'd us; by delivering us out of thoſe Temptations, which we are moſt ſubject unto; and by forgiving us, and turning our Hearts from thoſe Sins, which we have been moſt guilty of, and which we are yet moſt inclinable to; and by *cleanſing us from all Filthineſs, both of the Fleſh and Spirit; that we may grow perfect in Holineſs, in the Fear of God.* And, in ſhort, *that it would pleaſe the Lord, that our whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body, may be preſerv'd blameleſs unto the Coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Amen. Amen.*

SER-

SERMON V.

God's Judgments againſt Whoremongers and Adulterers.

HEB. xiii. 4.

—Whoremongers, and Adulterers, God will judge.

I HAVE already treated of the firſt Part of this Verſe, concerning the Honour and Innocency of Marriage; wherein I have ſhewn, how honourable Marriage was from the firſt Inſtitution of it; which made it an holy, and conſequently an honourable State, as it is an Ordinance of God. And alſo how honourable it is for the Neceſſity and Uſe-

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SERM. V. fulneſs of it, towards the Increaſe and Welfare of Mankind. And likewiſe, how honourable it is for the happy, and peaceable Fruits of it; it being the very Bond of Unity, Love, and Peace, between the Perſons that are well married. And finally, how honourable it is for the Purity, and Innocence of it; *the Marriage-Bed being undefil'd*; and it being ordain'd of God, as a Remedy againſt Sin; even, againſt ſome of the greateſt of Sins; that is, againſt thoſe heinous Sins of Whoredom, and Adultery; which do make all thoſe, that are given to them, hateful to all virtuous Men, and liable to the Judgments of God. For, as the Text ſays, *Whoremongers, and Adulterers, God will judge.* This laſt Part of the Verſe will now be proper to be conſider'd: In treating whereof I will endeavour to ſhew,

First, How God does very juſtly and remarkably judge, and puniſh Whoremongers, and Adulterers, in this World,

And, Secondly,

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Secondly, That unleſs they come to conſider, and repent, and humble themſelves before God for ſo great a Wickedneſs, and alſo utterly forſake, and abhor it; which unleſs they do, God will moſt ſurely and ſeverely judge, and puniſh them, in the World to come.

First, I am to ſhew, that God does very juſtly and remarkably judge, and puniſh Whoremongers and Adulterers, in this World.

Now, God hath ſeveral Ways of judging, and puniſhing, this Kind of evil Doers in this World. As,

First, By bringing them to Shame, and making them a Reproach among Men.

Secondly, By bringing them into great Straits, and Troubles.

Thirdly, By viſiting them with Sickneſs, and Weakneſs, and Pain, and Diſeaſes, and Death. And,

Fourthly,

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Fourthly, By ſuffering them to be drawn on, by ſo great a Wickedneſs, into many other evil, and hurtful Things; as, into Hatreds, and Strifes, and ſometimes to the worſt of Deaths, even to Murder itſelf.

All theſe evil Things, which Whoremongers and Adulterers ſuffer in this World, do chiefly relate to their Bodies; but God hath alſo another Way of puniſhing them in this World, which is worſe than all the reſt; and that is,

Fifthly, By grievouſly afflicting them in their Souls; by making them bear the Guilt and the Burden of their Sins, ſo long as they live; unleſs they repent, and leave them off. Which muſt be a very ſad Judgment to theſe, and to all other heinous Sinners; becauſe their guilty Conſcience will not allow them to have much Satisfaction in their Minds, or comfortable Enjoyment of their Lives; but rather muſt give them a great deal of Diſturbance, Terror, and Torment.

Theſe

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These are some of the most remarkable Judgments of God upon Whoremongers, and Adulterers, in this World. As I shall shew in their Order; but only of three of them in this Discourse. As,

First, That God doth very remarkably judge, and punish, Whoremongers and Adulterers in this World; by frequently bringing them to Shame, and making them a Reproach among Men.

This indeed is one common Judgment, or Brand, which God hath set upon all Manner of Wickedness, that it generally brings those that follow it to Shame, and to be a Reproach. For, as *Solomon* says, *Sin is a Reproach to any People*, Prov. xiv. 34. *Sin is a Reproach to any People*; because, it both debases them in the Sight of other Men, and also makes them asham'd, and confounded at themselves; when they come to see the Folly, and the Wickedness of their Ways. When such Persons, as are much given to Wickedness, come once to themselves, to be made sensible of

their

SERM. V. their Sins, they can find no Pleaſure, but much Shame and Sorrow in them. Which made the Apoſtle ſay, *What Fruit had ye in thoſe Things, whereof ye are now aſham'd?* Rom. vi. 21.

But of all the Sins, that are a Reproach to any People, thoſe of Whoredom and Adultery are ſome of the moſt hateful, and ſhameful. For theſe are ſuch baſe and ſcandalous Sins, that they are fit only to be reckon'd among the ſhameful Works of Darkneſs. As it is ſaid, *Let us caſt off the Works of Darkneſs, and let us live honeſtly*, or decently, *as in the Day; not in Rioting and Drunkenneſs, not in Chambering and Wantonneſs; nor make Proviſion for the Fleſh, to fulfil the Luſts thereof*, Rom. xiii. 12, 13, 14.

All theſe Sins are ſuitably ſorted, and fitly join'd together; and by way of Diſtinction, or Reproach, are properly call'd the Works of Darkneſs: Becauſe as thoſe that are drunken, are uſually drunken in the Night; ſo thoſe that are given to Chambering and Wantonneſs, they commonly

monly chuſe ſuch Places and Seaſons, as are fitteſt for them, to hide their Shame; and therefore they love to be in ſecret, and in the Dark, for fear of being diſcover'd. According to that of *Job*, ſaying, *The Eye of the Adulterer waiteth for the Twilight, and ſays, that no Eye ſhall ſee him; and diſguiſeth his Face; for the Morning is to them, as the Shadow of Death; and if one know them, they are in the Terrors of the Shadow of Death*, Job xxiv. 15, 17. SERM. V.

And well may all Whoremongers, and Adulterers, and all ſuch evil Doers, that are given to ſuch baſe Works of Darkneſs, be ſo much afraid, and aſham'd of the Light; becauſe their Deeds are ſo very evil. For, indeed, *it is a Shame, even to ſpeak of thoſe Things, which are done of them in ſecret*, Epheſ. v. 12. It is a Shame, indeed, that ſuch Things ſhould be heard of among Men, eſpecially among Chriſtians; who profeſs ſuch a pure, and holy Religion. For the Holy Scriptures would perſuade us, to keep ourſelves ſo innocent, and undefil'd, and free from the Sins of Uncleanneſs; as not to have ſo much

SERM. V. much as the Name, or the Remembrance of them left among us. For thus ſaith the Apoſtle, *But Fornication, and all Uncleanneſs, or Covetouſneſs, let it not be once nam'd among you, as becometh Saints; neither Filthineſs, nor fooliſh Talking, and Jeſting, which are not convenient*, Epheſ. v. 3, 4.

It is certainly very unbecoming, and a Reproach to Chriſtians, who ſhould be all Saints, or a peculiar holy People, that there ſhould be any of them given to Whoredom, and Adultery; a Chriſtian, and a Whoremonger, being very diſagreeable, and irreconcileable Terms. But if, notwithſtanding all the ſtrict Rules of godly Living, laid down in the Holy Scriptures; if for all this there be any, that call themſelves Chriſtians, that are given to ſuch foul Crimes, as Adultery, and Whoredom, or Fornication; we are caution'd to mark, and avoid, all ſuch ſhameful wicked People. For, ſays the Apoſtle, *I wrote to you, in an Epiſtle, not to keep company with Fornicators*, 1 Cor. v. 9.

Such

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Such filthy Perſons ought to be ſhun'd, that they may be brought to Shame, to Sorrow, and to ſincere Repentance; and that others alſo may take Warning by them, to flee from Whoredom and Adultery, as ſuch ſhameful and hurtful Sins; which wound, and ruin a Man every Way; both in his Soul and Body, both in his Perſon and Reputation; and which, if continued in, will ſoon bring a Man under more Guilt, than can eaſily be wiped off; and under greater Reproach, than can be ſhortly worn out. As King *Solomon*, who had himſelf been too much given to this Kind of Sin, and had ſorrowfully felt the ill Effects of it, hath left us this, as one of his Obſervations upon it: *That whoſo committeth Adultery with a Woman, lacketh Underſtanding; he that doth it, deſtroyeth his own Soul. A Wound, and Diſhonour ſhall he get; and his Reproach ſhall not be wiped off*, Prov. vi. 32, 33. And tho' he indeed had never been ſo wicked himſelf, as to be guilty of Adultery; as his Father, King *David*, by the Violence of a ſudden Temptation, once was; but, tho'

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tho' he was clear of that, and wholly refrain'd from other Mens Wives, yet he did not keep clear of whoriſh Women; whereby he got ſo great a Wound in his Virtue, and hath left his Name under ſo much Diſhonour, or ſo great a Blot upon his Memory, as will never be forgotten, ſo long as the World laſteth. For he is branded in Scripture, as one that was much given to ſtrange * Women, and that ſuffer'd very much many Ways by it. And tho' he ſeems to have liv'd to have ſeen his Folly, and to have been greatly troubled at it, and to have left it off many Years before he died, and to have made all the Satisfaction for it that he could; by the many ſerious Reflexions, that he hath left us concerning it; and the ſtrict Warnings, that he hath given us againſt it; beſides the many excellent Rules of virtuous and godly Living, that he hath left us in his Book of *Proverbs*, and *Eccleſiaſtes*; all which is a good Proof, or a good Token, that he had ſincerely repented of it, and left it off; ſeeing, that he hath done ſo much to ſet all others both againſt it,

* Nehemiah xiii. 26.

it, and againſt all other Wickedneſs. And yet, notwithſtanding all this, it will be ever remembred againſt him, that ſuch a great and wiſe Man, ſhould be ſo much led aſtray by ſtrange Women; ſo much to his Diſhonour, and almoſt to the Ruin, both of himſelf and of his Poſterity. Which alſo is a good Proof of this Truth, that this is one of the common and juſt Judgments of God upon Whoremongers, and Adulterers in this World; that, by theſe baſe Sins of theirs, they do generally bring themſelves to great Shame, even to be a Reproach among Men. SERM. V.

For the World is not yet grown ſo wicked, but that Adultery, and even Whoredom, is reckon'd a Reproach to any Man that is given to it. Yea they, that are the moſt given to it themſelves, and even make light, or a Mock of it; yet if any that are dear to them, as their Wives, or Daughters, or Siſters, ſhould happen to be abus'd, and defil'd in that Manner; they would look upon it as ſo great a Reproach, and would take it for ſo great an Injury, and Provocation, as

SERM. V. they could ſcarce bear, but would be fit to revenge it; and to give the ſame Reaſon for it, as *Jacob*'s Sons did to their Father; Saying, *Shall he deal with our Siſter*, or with our Daughter, *as with an Harlot?* Gen. xxxiv. 31. Now, if thoſe that are themſelves the moſt viciouſly inclin'd that Way, would be apt to think and to ſay thus of it; then, how much greater Reproach muſt it appear in the Eyes of all thoſe that are virtuous and religious, to have any of their own Relations, or even to hear of any, that call themſelves Chriſtians, to be given to ſuch a ſhameful Sin, as Adultery, or Fornication.

Secondly, God alſo judgeth, and puniſheth Whoremongers, and Adulterers, in this World; by cauſing them to be very often brought into great Straits and Troubles, by Means of their Sins.

Theſe are ſome of thoſe expenſive, and waſtful Sins, which frequently bring a Man, and all that he has to Deſtruction. For ſome of the greateſt Waſters of their Subſtance, that are even given to Prodi-

gality,

gality, do not ſpend more upon their Glut- SERM. V.
tony, and Drunkenneſs; in wallowing in Plenty, and faring ſumptuouſly every Day; neither do ſome other high and haughty Perſons ſpend more upon their Pride and Vanity; in decking their Bodies with delicate, coſtly, and gorgeous Apparel; and their Tables, and Houſes, with rich Furniture; ſuch great Waſters of their Subſtance, I ſay, as both theſe Sorts of Perſons are known to be, do not ſpend more, the one upon their Extravagancies, and the other upon their Pride and Vanities, than ſome Whoremongers, and Adulterers, do conſume upon their Luſts. By which Means many Families have been ruin'd, and many Men brought into great Troubles, and Diſtreſſes; even ſome Perſons of large Eſtates, or of much Riches, have by this Means been brought very low, or into hard Straits, and to do mean Things, much below them: And many others, of more ordinary Circumſtances, have by this lewd Way of living been brought to ſuffer very much for it, even ſometimes to ſuffer Hunger. And which is no new, or ſtrange Thing; for it was long ſince ob-

SERM. V. ſerv'd by *Solomon*, to be common with ſuch Men, as were given to Whoredom, to be thereby often brought to ſo much Difficulty, and Scarcity, as to be almoſt fit to want Bread; or that, *By Means of a whoriſh Woman a Man is brought to a Piece of Bread*, Prov. vi. 26. As a Man may eaſily be brought to a Piece of Bread by a whoriſh Woman; not only becauſe ſhe is, *like the* * *Horſe-Leech, always crying, Give, give*; but eſpecially becauſe that, by Means of ſuch baſe Women, ſuch Men as follow them, are led thereby into many other evil Ways; eſpecially, into an Habit of Idleneſs, Careleſneſs, and Extravagance; to the great waſting of their Time, neglecting of their Buſineſs, conſuming of their Subſtance, and impoveriſhing of themſelves. And all this according to the juſt Judgment of God upon the Sins of Whoredom, and Adultery; that if ſome Men will be ſo fooliſh, as to take ſuch evil Courſes, and to follow ſuch vain Perſons, they muſt be in Danger of falling into a Snare

* Prov. xxx. 15, 16.

Snare and a * Pit, which will quickly de- SERM. V.
vour them, and all that they have. And by that Means, they may ſoon get enough of their Sins, by getting enough of the bitter Fruits thereof; even at the End thereof, by meeting with Sorrow, and Poverty enough: According to that Proverb of *Solomon*, ſaying, *He that followeth after vain Perſons, ſhall have Poverty enough*, Prov. xxviii. 19.

Now, no Perſons are vainer, nor any Converſation worſe, nor any Ways more wicked and waſtful, than thoſe of lewd Women. As *Solomon* ſpeaks more plainly to this Purpoſe, in another Place; ſaying, *He that keepeth company with Harlots, ſpendeth his Subſtance*, Prov. xxix. 3. And as our Bleſſed Saviour alſo intimateth in that Parable of the Prodigal; who, among his many other prodigal and waſtful Ways, was given to Whoring; whereby he ſoon brought all that he had to nought, and himſelf to Miſery, or to the mean Office

* Prov. xxiii. 27, 28. *For an Whore is a deep Ditch, and a ſtrange Woman is a narrow Pit. She alſo lieth in wait as for a Prey; and increaſeth the Tranſgreſſors among Men.*

SERM. V. of looking after an Herd of Swine, and to eat Huſks with them, for want of Bread. For, he is repreſented, as having *waſted his Subſtance with riotous Living, and devour'd it with Harlots*, Luke xv. 13, 30.

Which Way, of waſting one's Subſtance by Whoredom, as it is a moſt wicked Way, ſo it is ſometimes a very ſpeedy one. For when Men are once fallen into this Way, to mind nothing ſcarce but their Follies, their Pleaſures, and their Sins, and, in a great Meaſure, to throw off the Care of all their other Concerns, they muſt needs be in the ready Road to Ruin; becauſe they put themſelves out of all Means of proſpering, and out of the Way of God's Bleſſing; but rather bring down his Curſe, and his Judgment upon them; by letting them alone to go on in their own evil Courſes, and to follow their own Hearts Luſts; which will ſoon lead them headlong into their own Sorrow, and Deſtruction. For this is one of the juſt Judgments of God upon Whoremongers and Adulterers,

Adulterers, to make them ſmart for it; and frequently to find Poverty and Trouble enough, ſo long as they live in this World; and without any Hopes, unleſs they amend their Lives, of being happy hereafter. And again, SERM. V.

Thirdly, God alſo judgeth, and puniſheth, Whoremongers and Adulterers in this World, by making their Sins bring upon them many Pains, and Infirmities, and Diſeaſes, and very often a miſerable untimely Death.

It was indeed the Judgment of God, declar'd in the Law of *Moſes*, that whoſoever committed Adultery ſhould ſurely be put to death, both the Man and the Woman *. Which is worthy to be made a ſtanding Law in all Nations, which profeſs any Religion, eſpecially the Chriſtian; becauſe, Adultery is as great a Sin, if not greater now under the Chriſtian, than it was formerly under the Jewiſh Religion. But tho' the Law of ours, and perhaps of

* Leviticus xx. 10.

SERM. V. ſome other Nations, may be too favourable to ſuch evil Doers, yet they are cruel enough to themſelves. For the ſtrange Courſes, that they take, will certainly draw many Evils upon them; and in Time, even before their natural Time of dying, will moſt probably bring them to Death, and Deſtruction. For Whoredom, and Adultery, have ruin'd many Men this Way; by bringing them to be greatly diſorder'd, and diſeas'd in their Bodies; which, not long after, has ended in their Death. Yea, Multitudes have been weakned, wounded, and ſlain thereby. And therefore *Solomon* adviſes all thoſe that are young, and all others that would do well, carefully to avoid all ſuch Ways of Wickedneſs, and Deſtruction; ſuch as are the Ways of an Harlot. For, ſays he, *Let not thine Heart decline to the Ways of an Harlot, go not aſtray in her Paths. For ſhe hath caſt down many wounded, yea, many ſtrong Men have been ſlain by her. For her Houſe is the Way to Hell*, or the Grave; *going down to the Chambers of Death*, Prov. vii. 25, 26, 27.

Which

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Which is given as a Caution to thoſe that are well, and would continue ſo, to keep themſelves from the Ways of the Deſtroyer; ſome of the worſt of which Ways, are thoſe of Whoredom, and Adultery. Becauſe they are ſo very deſtructive to the Innocency, Happineſs, and Continuance of a Man's Life upon Earth. Upon which Account it is ſaid, *That the Adultereſs hunteth for the precious Life*, Prov. vi. 26. And therefore they that love Life, and think it precious, and would gladly ſee many and good Days, they are advis'd not to give themſelves unto Whoredom; becauſe it uſually ſo greatly impaireth the Health, and conſumeth the Strength, and ſhorteneth the Life, of thoſe that are given to it. As the Mother of King *Lemuel*, or *Solomon*, wiſely advis'd him in Time to beware of it: Saying, *What, my Son, give not thy Strength unto Women; nor thy Ways unto that which deſtroyeth Kings*, Prov. xxxi. 1, 2, 3.

So that as Life, and Health, and Strength are Gifts, and Bleſſings of God, too valuable

Serm. V. ble to be waſted, and worn away in Wickedneſs, and to be conſum'd upon one's Luſts; ſo all they that are wiſe will take heed to themſelves, not to be tempted, and ſeduced that Way, to their own Ruin. For, as *Solomon* ſays, *It is only the ſimple ones, that lack Underſtanding, which frequent the Harlot's Houſe, and liſten to her, when ſhe ſays; Stoln Waters are ſweet, and Bread eaten in ſecret is pleaſant. But they know not that the Dead are there; and that her Gueſts are in the Depths of Hell,* Prov. ix. 13, *&c.* No, thoſe that are fooliſh, that are wholly rul'd, and led by their Senſes, their Pleaſures, and their Sins, they do not know, or will not conſider, till they come to feel, and be forc'd to confeſs indeed, that the End thereof is as bitter as Wormwood. And therefore King *Solomon*, when he would deſcribe a Whoremonger, or an Adulterer, to the Life, he repreſents him as one of the ſimpleſt among Men; as if he had not the Underſtanding of a Man, but had degraded himſelf into the Senſeleſneſs of a Beaſt, which hath no Underſtanding; becauſe he runs ſo heedleſly into his own Ruin, by going after vain Perſons,

Perſons, and whoriſh Women. And there- SERM. V.
fore he compares a Whoremonger, for his great Simplicity, unto a ſilly Bird haſting into a Net or a Snare; and for Stupidity, to an Ox led to the Slaughter-houſe; and for Shame, to a Knave, or a Fool, trail'd to the Stocks. For, ſays he, *At the Window of my Houſe, I look'd through a Caſement; and behold, among the ſimple ones, I decern'd, among the Youths, a young Man void of Underſtanding, paſſing through the Street; there met him a Woman, with the Attire of an Harlot; he went after her ſtraightway, as an Ox goeth to the Slaughter; or as a Fool, to the Correction of the Stocks. Till a Dart ſtrike thro' his Liver; as a Bird haſteth to the Snare, and knoweth not, that it is for his Life*, Prov. vii. 6——24.

But then, when their Sin finds them out, *when the Dart ſtrikes thro' their Liver*, when their Heart is pierced thro' with Pain and Grief, when their Strength is almoſt waſted, and their Body juſt worn out, and their Life nigh to its End; then their Conſcience is alſo prick'd, and they begin

SERM. V. begin to regret, and to ſee their Folly, and the Miſchief of their Whoredoms; and wiſh then, that they had hearken'd to good Advice, and follow'd better Ways. As *Solomon* counſels every young Man, to take Warning by them, before it be too late. For, ſays he, *My Son, remove thy Way from the ſtrange Woman, and come not nigh to the Door of her Houſe; leſt thou give thine Honour to others, and thy Years unto the cruel; and thou mourn at the laſt, when thy Fleſh and thy Body are conſum'd; and ſay, How have I hated Inſtruction, and my Heart deſpiſed Reproof; and have not obey'd the Voice of my Teachers, nor inclin'd mine Ear to them, that inſtructed me?* Prov. v. 1——14. But, this is the juſt Judgment of God upon Whoremongers, and Adulterers in this World; that they are frequently brought by their Sins into a weak and diſeas'd Habit of Body, unto a tedious Sort of Life, and unto an untimely Death.

There is alſo another common Way, by which God often judgeth, and puniſheth Whoremongers, and Adulterers in this World;

World; and that is, by ſuffering them to be drawn in by their Sins into many other evil, and hurtful Things; as, into Hatreds, and Strifes, and ſometimes to the worſt of Deaths, even to Murder itſelf. The Conſideration whereof I ſhall leave to the next Diſcourſe; and, for the preſent, ſhall only make an Application of what hath now been ſaid. SERM. V.

Now, from what hath been ſaid, concerning the ſeveral Ways of God's judging, and puniſhing Whoremongers, and Adulterers, even in this World; from hence we may ſee ſo much of the Miſchief, and Heinouſneſs of theſe Sins, as not to think lightly of them; as if there was but little Sin, or Harm in them. For tho' they are indeed but too much practis'd by many Men of baſe Manners, of prophane Principles, and of inconſiderate Minds; who know not, or conſider not, that they are following ſuch Courſes, as will bring them to Deſtruction at laſt. And tho' theſe heinous and hurtful Crimes, of Whoredom and Adultery, are but too commonly ſet light by, and made a Sport, or a Jeſt

of

SERM. V. of by ſome; yet, it is only by ſuch ſimple ones, or *Fools*, as *Solomon* calls them, who *delight in Miſchief, and make a Mock at Sin*, Prov. xiv. 9. And tho' there are many others in the World ſo deſperately wicked, as not only to commit theſe ſad ſhameful Sins, but even to make their boaſt thereof; yet they are only ſuch ſhameleſs, and wretched Reprobates, as neither fear God, nor regard Man, nor ſeem to have any Concern for themſelves, what will become of them, either in this World or the next. And therefore they go on *glorying in their Shame, and ſporting themſelves with their own Confuſion; and ſo turn Mockers, walking after their own ungodly Luſts; being ſenſual, and having not the Spirit.* As we may ſee ſuch wicked Sort of People fully deſcrib'd in the *Epiſtle of St. Jude.* Tho' there are, I ſay, in the World, too many ſuch ſenſeleſs, ſhameleſs, and deſperate Perſons; yet, we ought not to be Partakers with them; nor to be led by their bad Examples, and evil Communications, into ſuch wicked Ways, as would corrupt our good Manners; and at laſt would prove the utter Ruin of ourſelves.

ſelves. For, ſurely, God would not have ſent ſo many ſad Judgments, even in this World, upon Whoremongers and Adulterers, if their Ways had not been very grievous, and abominably ſinful; ſo as to bring them under the Wrath, and Judgment of God. And for this Reaſon the Apoſtle wiſely adviſes us, not to keep ſuch bad Company, nor to follow their evil Ways, nor to mind their idle Words, to do wickedly like them, who lie ſo much under the Wrath of God. For, ſays he, *Let no Man deceive you with vain Words; for becauſe of theſe Things*, ſome of which are *Filthineſs, and Fornication, or Whoredom*; becauſe of which Thing, ſays he, *the Wrath of God cometh upon the Children of Diſobedience; be not ye therefore Partakers with them*, Epheſ. v. 6, 7. SERM. V.

And therefore, as we tender the Favour and the Bleſſing of God, and the Happineſs of ourſelves; the Welfare of our Bodies, and the Salvation of our Souls; let us avoid all ſuch hurtful Luſts, and follow ſuch Things as are contrary thereunto: Such Things, I mean, as tend to a holy,

SERM. V. harmleſs, quiet, and innocent Life; ſuch as Temperance and Soberneſs, Purity and Chaſtity, Godlineſs and Honeſty. That when we have fought the good Fight of Faith, againſt all the Temptations of the Devil, the World, and the Fleſh; we may at laſt obtain the Reward, which the Lord hath promis'd to all them that lead a godly Life. Amen. Amen.

SER-

SERMON VI.

God's Judgments againſt Whoremongers and Adulterers.

HEB. xiii. 4.

——Whoremongers, and Adulterers, God will judge.

THE Heinouſneſs of theſe Sins of Whoredom, and Adultery, may be ſeen from the ſore Judgments of God, which uſually attend them; and which alſo are moſt juſt. For as Whoremongers and Adulterers are ſome of the worſt of Sinners, and do the moſt Miſchief in the World; ſo it is but juſt, that ſomething extraordinary ſhould be done unto them;

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SERM. VI. in order to ſhew them, how abominable their Ways are in the Sight of God, and to make them the more odious unto Men; by ſome remarkable Judgment attending them, even in this preſent Life. As hath been ſhewn in the laſt Diſcourſe, how that God hath ſeveral remarkable Ways of judging, and puniſhing, Whoremongers and Adulterers in this Life; both as to their Bodies, and to their worldly Eſtate. As,

Firſt, By bringing them to Shame, and making them a Reproach among Men. As it is very common for ſuch evil Doers, to get to themſelves a Blot, and Diſhonour, and even to be deſpis'd among Men. And,

Secondly, By bringing upon them many Troubles, and great Diſtreſſes. As they that follow vain Perſons, and haunt Harlots Houſes, or keep Harlots in their own Houſes, do frequently bring themſelves into great Troubles, and ſometimes into great Straits, if not to Poverty itſelf. And,

Thirdly, By making their fooliſh and hurtful Luſts, of Whoredom and Adul-

tery, bring upon them many Pains, and Infirmities, and Diſeaſes; and ſometimes alſo bringing them to a miſerable untimely Death. For their loathſome Sin does frequently turn to a Sore in the Fleſh, and to Rottenneſs in their Bones; which makes them ſometimes not to live out half their Days. Theſe are ſome of the common Judgments of God upon Whoremongers and Adulterers, even in this World; as hath been ſhewn in the foregoing Diſcourſe. SERM. VI.

But God hath alſo another Way of judging, and puniſhing, Whoremongers and Adulterers in this World, as to their Bodies, or as to their Perſons; and that is, By ſuffering them to be drawn on, by their fooliſh and hurtful Luſts of Whoredom and Adultery, into many other evil and hurtful Things; as, into Hatreds, and Striſes; and ſometimes to the worſt of Deaths, even to Murder itſelf. As I ſhall now, under the fourth Head, endeavour to prove.

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Whoredom and Adultery are ſuch heinous Sins, and ſo full of Evil, that they are often ſeverely puniſh'd; according to the Greatneſs of the Wickedneſs, and of the Harm, that is in them. For to commit Whoredom, or for two ſingle Perſons to be diſhoneſt, and naught with one another; they do thereby endanger the utter Ruin of themſelves, both as to this World and the next. For they thereby deſtroy one another's Modeſty, and Virtue; and quite blaſt the Reputation, and good Name of them both; which they will ſcarce ever be able to recover, or to be well look'd upon afterwards by any Perſons of Credit, and Virtue; but their Whoredom will be remembred to their Prejudice, ſo long as they live. Which alſo will be a great Hinderance to their Proſperity in the World; which muſt be a great Diſcouragement to their Induſtry, and Honeſty; if they would live orderly, and virtuouſly for the future. But the worſt of it is, that many of this Kind of Sinners do rather grow deſperate, and harden'd in their Wickedneſs; and come to be moſt careleſs,

leſs, and ſhameleſs, and miſerable Wretches many Ways: As this is what we know, that many Harlots, and Whoremongers, do frequently come to. Whereby, I ſay, any two Perſons, that are ſo wickedly inclin'd to be naught with one another, do greatly endanger the Ruining of one another for ever; by tempting, and leading one another into ſuch a Sin, as they may not eaſily leave off afterwards; or perhaps may never truly repent of, ſo long as they live. Or if one of them, either the Man or the Woman, ſhould come to be ſenſible of the Heinouſneſs of their Sin, and to repent, and leave it off; yet it would grieve him, and the more penitent he is for his own Share of the Guilt, the more it would grieve him ever after to think, that he had been the Occaſion of leading the other, and perhaps ſeveral others, into ſuch a Wickedneſs, as may be the Ruin of them. All which ſad Things are frequently the ill Effects of Whoredom. SERM. VI.

But eſpecially to commit Adultery, that is, with one that is married to another, is yet far more ſinful, and hurtful; and is

Serm. VI. the worſt Way of parting Man and Wife, by dividing their Hearts; by withdrawing the Wife's Love, and Reſpect from her Huſband; and by ſetting him as much againſt her: By bringing a ſhameful Wickedneſs upon the Woman, a Jealouſy and Rage upon the Man, and Baſtardy upon the Children; which does wrong, and vex a Man in the higheſt Degree; to have his Wife diſhoneſt, his Children ſuſpected, and all his Labours and Profits divided between legitimate and baſe Children; or wholly enjoy'd by a ſpurious, and baſe Brood. There are theſe, I ſay, and many other Wounds made by Adultery, which are incurable; whereupon it may be accounted one of the moſt heinous, and pernicious Sins.

And as Whoredom, and Adultery, are thus remarkable for their exceeding Sinfulneſs, and for the Abundance of Miſchief many Ways done thereby; ſo they are generally for ſome great Puniſhment, or for ſome notorious Judgment attending them; not only by great Hatreds, Quarrels, and Diſturbances; but even by Blood, and Murder,

Murder, often following thereupon; by their murdering others, or by their being murder'd themſelves. SERM. VI.

As to Whoremongers, and Adulterers murdering, or attempting to murder others, for the Sake of their own Luſts, is no very uncommon Thing: For they are eaſily ſtir'd up by their Luſtfulneſs to Wrath and Revenge, even about their Sin, or about an Harlot; and thereby to maim, and murder one another.

But the plaineſt Proof of this Caſe, is the abominable wicked Practice of many Harlots themſelves; who frequently uſe Means to kill their Children within them; and if they fail in that, then, as ſoon as they have brought them forth, to ſtifle, and murder them; or by ſome Shift to expoſe, and make away with them. Which ſhews what a ſhameful Sin Whoredom is, and how exceedingly ſinful, or how full of Wickedneſs and Miſchief; ſo to harden Mothers Hearts againſt their own Offſpring; and to make them ſo cruel, even againſt Nature, as to lay violent Hands

Serm. VI. upon their own tender innocent Babes, as ſoon as they have bore them: And all this to conceal their Shame, to eſcape Puniſhment, and to go on ſtill in their Sin; which is ſuch an ill Effect of Whoredom, as is ſcarce to be parallell'd by any other Wickedneſs.

But what I chiefly propoſe to prove under this Head is, What great Miſchief Whoremongers, and Adulterers, do often bring upon themſelves; ſo as to be ſometimes even murder'd, or ſome others that are dear to them, for their Wickedneſs. A full Proof whereof we have in the Caſe of King *David*; whoſe Adultery brought Hatreds, and Strifes, and Murders, and manifold other Miſchiefs, upon himſelf and his Family; and thoſe too very notorious, both for Kind and Degree. For by his Abuſe of *Uriah*'s Wife, and the Killing of him, his own Sons learn'd to hate, and quarrel, and kill one another; and alſo to commit Whoredom, and Adultery; and even to riſe up in Rebellion againſt *David* himſelf, who was both their Father, and their King. So that from that

that very Time, and for that very Thing, that he committed ſo great a Crime with the Wife of *Uriah*, he ſeems to have had but little Peace, or Pleaſure, all his Life after; except what he had within himſelf, from his own Heart; from his ſincere, broken, and contrite Heart; from the Teſtimony of his own Conſcience, of his unfeigned Repentance, and from his Aſſurance of God's Favour, and Forgiveneſs: But as for any outward Comfort, he had not much, either in his numerous Family, or in his large Dominions; either from his Subjects, or from his own Children; but rather, as a juſt Judgment upon him for his late great Tranſgreſſion, he met with much Trouble from them both. For not only that Child, which he had by Adultery with *Uriah*'s Wife, died ſoon after; according to God's * threatning him, as Part of his Puniſhment for that Wickedneſs; but alſo his eldeſt Son † *Ammon* raviſh'd his Daughter *Tamar*, the Siſter of *Abſalom*; for which *Abſalom* ſoon after ſlew him. And this ſame *Abſalom*, who ſhew'd ſo much Concern for *Ammon*'s lying

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* 2 Sam. xii. 14. † Ibid. xiii.

SERM. VI. ing with his Siſter; yet he ſcrupled not to lie with his Father's Wives *, or Concubines; and that publickly in the Day-time, in the Sight of the Sun, and of all the People; and alſo to raiſe a Rebellion of the Subjects againſt his Father, King *David*; to take away his Kingdom, and his Life too from him, if he could; in Proſecution of which evil Deſign againſt his Father, he was caught, and hang'd by the Hair of his Head on a Tree, as he deſerv'd. And when King *David* himſelf drew nigh to his Death, two of his Sons ſtrove for the Kingdom, and † one of them ſlew the other. And even his beloved Son *Solomon* was viſited with ſeveral great Judgments from God ‡; who rais'd many Enemies againſt him, to puniſh him; not only for this great Iniquity of his Father, but alſo for his own Wickedneſs that Way, in being given to ſtrange Women; who were fit to alienate his Heart from the true Worſhip of God.

And, to conclude all, after King *Solomon*'s Death, ten Parts of the Kingdom were

* 2 Sam. xvi. 21, 22. † 1 Kings ii. 24, 25. ‡ 1 Kings xi. 14——41.

were taken from *David*'s Houſe, and given to another; whereby his Poſterity were engag'd in many Wars; as if they were never to live long in Peace, or as if *the Sword was never to depart from his Houſe.* All theſe ſad Things befel King *David* and his Houſe, as a juſt Judgment of God upon him, for the great Injury done to *Uriah* and his Wife; according to the Word of the Lord, which he ſent to him by *Nathan* the Prophet: Saying, *The Sword ſhall never depart from thine Houſe; becauſe thou haſt deſpiſed me, and haſt taken the Wife of* Uriah, *the* Hittite, *to be thy Wife. Therefore, behold, I will raiſe up Evil againſt thee, out of thine own Houſe; and I will take thy Wives before thine Eyes, and give them unto thy Neighbours*; that is, to *Abſalom*, who did not deſerve to be call'd his Son; *and he ſhall lie with thy Wives, in the Sight of this Sun. For thou did'ſt it ſecretly, but I will do this Thing before all* Iſrael, *and before the Sun*, 2 Sam. xii. 10, 11, 12. SERM. VI.

Now if King *David* had thought, that ſo much Miſchief would have come of it; that

SERM. VI. that he ſhould ſuffer ſo much in his own Perſon, and in his Family, and in his Poſterity, for medling with another Man's Wife, he would ſurely have forborn it; if not out of Shame and Abhorrence of ſo great a Crime, yet out of Fear of ſo many ſad Things falling upon him, and his Houſe, becauſe of it. And yet, how could he expect any other, but that his Sons would ſtick at no Wickedneſs, neither at Whoredom, nor Adultery, nor at Murder itſelf; when he had ſet them ſuch an ill Example? And that his Subjects alſo might be eaſily tempted by one of his Sons, to riſe up in Arms againſt him; when they found that neither their Wives, nor their own Lives were ſecure from him; if they might judge from what he had done to *Uriah* and his Wife. However, from what he had ſuffer'd, he could not but be convinc'd of this, What a great Wickedneſs Adultery is, to deſerve ſo many grievous Judgments from God. And from which all other great Perſons may be convinc'd, even the greateſt Kings upon Earth, what a dangerous Thing it is for any of them to do likewiſe. And ſo may take

take this as a Warning to themſelves, not to abuſe their Wealth, or their Power, to the corrupting, and ruining of others, for the Sake of fulfilling their own unreaſonable Wills, or gratifying their carnal Luſts; leſt they alſo be brought to ſuffer by ſome of thoſe Ways, tho' perhaps not ſo extremely, as King *David* did. SERM. VI.

For *David* being a very great King, and withal a very * good Man, excepting this Caſe of *Uriah*; therefore this Sin of Adultery was the greater in him, and accordingly was the more remarkably puniſh'd; becauſe it gave great Offence to the People of God, that is, to all virtuous and religious People, both then and ever ſince; and alſo *gave great Occaſion to the Enemies of the Lord to blaſpheme*, 2 Sam. xii. 14. As we may be ſure, that the Enemies of the Lord, or the Generation of the Wicked in thoſe Days, would make the worſt Reflexions they could upon it, as they do in theſe evil Days of ours. As it is very remarkable, what a bad Uſe the Profligate, and the Prophane, make of it at this Time, even

* 1 Kings xv. 5.

SERM. VI. even ſo long afterwards, to cry down all Religion; as if Religion was nothing but a Name, and the Profeſſion of it nothing but a Pretence; ſeeing that ſo religious a Man as King *David* ſeem'd to be, was guilty of ſo great a Crime, as that of Adultery. For which, I ſay, he was the more ſeverely puniſh'd; as a Warning to all others, that make a ſtrict Profeſſion of Religion, to walk the more circumſpectly, and to live as innocently, and inoffenſively as they can; that the Enemies of the Lord, or the Enemies of Religion, may have no Occaſion to blaſpheme; or may have no ill Thing to ſay of them, or of the Religion which they profeſs.

This is the Account, which the Scripture gives us of King *David*'s Adultery, and of the many terrible Judgments of God, which fell upon him, and his Houſe for it; which, I ſay, fell the heavier upon him, becauſe he was ſo great a King, and ſo good a Man; except that he once gave way to this moſt heinous Sin, with the evil Circumſtances of it; upon which God thought fit to puniſh him worſe for it,

than,

than, we may ſuppoſe, he would have done to a meaner, tho' a much wickeder Perſon. SERM. VI.

Tho' Adultery, indeed, is ſuch a ſhameful and hurtful Sin, that it will not be excus'd, and paſs unpuniſh'd in any Body. But like Fire in a Man's Boſom, ſo will it ſcorch him; and leave ſome Scar, or Hurt upon him. For a Man might as eaſily carry Fire in his Boſom without feeling it, or getting any Harm by it; as commit Adultery, without a Blot, and Blame, and ſome ſore Judgment of God hanging over his Head for it. As *Solomon* obſerves, ſaying, *Can a Man take Fire in his Boſom, and his Clothes not be burnt; or can a Man go upon hot Coals, and his Feet not be burnt? So he that goeth to his Neighbour's Wife; whoſoever toucheth her, ſhall not be innocent*, Prov. vi. 27, 28, 29. No, how can any one be innocent, who is guilty of ſo much Wickedneſs and Miſchief, as lying with another Man's Wife? For thereby he cauſeth the Woman to ſin againſt her own Huſband, and againſt the Lord God; he maketh her alſo a Shame to all her Relations,

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tions, and a Reproach to all her Sex, eſpecially to all virtuous married Women; beſides the Guilt, the Shame, and the Hatred that he brings upon himſelf, by his great Wickedneſs in ruining another Man's Wife. And moreover, he raiſeth a great deal of Sorrow, and Diſturbance in a Family; he maketh ſuch wide Breaches between the Wife's Kindred, and the Huſband's, and the Adulterer's, as are ſcarce ever to be reconcil'd; and eſpecially, he ſtirreth up ſuch a furious Spirit in the injur'd Huſband, as is not eaſily to be appeas'd but by Revenge, to the great Damage, or Deſtruction of the Adulterer. For, as *Solomon* ſays, *Jealouſy is the Rage of a Man; therefore will he not ſpare in the Day of Vengeance; he will not regard any Ranſom, neither will he be content, tho' thou give many Gifts*, Prov. vi. 34, 35. Adultery is ſuch a Wound, and Injury, as is not to be heal'd, or repair'd; and as no Satisfaction can be made for the Miſchief of it; and therefore the Adulterer does ſometimes fall a Sacrifice, to make an Atonement for it.

And

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And not only Adulterers, but alſo Whoremongers, do breed ſo much Miſchief, that ſome of it does commonly fall upon their own Head. For it is not only for the Sake of a Wife, but alſo for the Sake of a Daughter, or a Siſter, or any other Relation, or a Friend, that is thus abus'd and tempted to Whoredom, that ſo many implacable Hatreds, and Quarrels do ariſe; which do frequently end in the Murder, or in the Hurt of the Offender. As there is a remarkable Inſtance in Scripture, concerning *Dinah*, the Daughter of *Jacob*; who being defil'd by *Sechem* the Son of *Hamor*, the Prince of the Country; two of her Brethren, *Simeon* and *Levi*, went, and ſlew both *Hamor*, and *Sechem* his Son, and all the Men in the City. And the Reaſon which they gave to their Father, for ſuch a bloody Maſſacre, was this; the abuſing of their Siſter. For, ſay they, *Should he deal with our Siſter, as with an Harlot?* Gen. xxxiv. 31.

Now this Caſe, between *Sechem* and *Dinah*, was the more remarkable, becauſe it

SERM. VI. was between two, who were deſign'd to be married together, if this Murder had not prevented it; which was occaſion'd by the Whoredom of *Sechem* with *Dinah* before Marriage. For her Brethren were enrag'd, that he had dealt with their Siſter, before they were married, as with an Harlot; and he himſelf was infatuated, to make an Harlot of her, whom he intended to have married. For tho' this be a Thing too common in our Days, yet one would think, that ſcarce any body could be guilty of ſo much Sin and Folly, as to make the Woman an Harlot, whom he deſir'd, and deſign'd for his Wife. For a virtuous and conſiderate Man would never tempt, and lead a Woman into ſuch a ſhameful Sin; whom he deſir'd ſhould be honeſt, and innocent ever after. But this, I ſay, was *Sechem*'s Crime, and Folly with *Dinah*; whom he greatly lov'd, and would gladly have married. For it is ſaid, in the third Verſe of that Chapter, *That he lov'd the Damſel, and that his Soul clave unto her.* Inſomuch, that both he, and his Father, made earneſt Suit, to get her for his Wife. Wherein they prevail'd, and both Par-

Parties were agreed, and Parents conſented, and Conditions or Articles made; but then, this overthrew all, and brought ſo much Miſchief inſtead of a Marriage, that he had before-time lain with her, and defil'd her. Which made her Brethren very wroth, becauſe, as it is ſaid in the ſeventh Verſe, *He had wrought Folly in* Iſrael, *in lying with* Jacob's *Daughter*; *which Thing ought not to be done.* And this was it, which occaſion'd ſuch a Breach, and ſo much Bloodſhed afterward. As we may read at large in the thirty fourth Chapter of *Geneſis*. SERM. VI.

Now all this, I ſay, was according to the juſt Judgment of God, and his common Way of puniſhing ſuch wicked Men, by letting them be drawn on by their Whoredoms into Hatreds, and Quarrels, and Murders; which commonly fall heavieſt upon themſelves: And which we need not wonder at, how ill ſoever ſuch People ſuffer for their Wickedneſs. For Whoredom is ſo great an Iniquity, as to be the moſt like to Idolatry, or the moſt proper to repreſent it, as it frequently does in Scripture; becauſe it is going a whoring

SERM. VI. after ſtrange Women, as Idolatry is after ſtrange Gods; and eſpecially, becauſe it does ſo much eſtrange ſuch People's Hearts from God, and God's Heart from them, as ſometimes to bring down his Vengeance upon them, by a great Deſtruction. As is recorded in Scripture, in that noted Caſe of the People of *Iſrael*, concerning *the Matter of* Peor *, that is, their Idolatry, and *the Matter of* Coſbi, that is, *the Whoredom of* Zimri †, *a Prince of a chief Houſe among the* Simeonites, who was caught with *Coſbi* a whoriſh *Midianitiſh* Woman; whereupon ‡ *Phineas*, the Son of *Eleazar* the Prieſt, went and ſlew them both, by running a Spear through their Bodies; which is call'd an § *executing Judgment*, the juſt Judgment of God upon them. And moreover, God was ſo very angry with them, what for their Idolatry and what for their Whoredom, that he ſlew many Thouſands of them by a Plague at that Time. And this is the Ground of that Caution, which the Apoſtle gives us againſt Whoredom or Fornication, for fear of the Wrath,

* Numb. xxv. 18. † Ibid. xxv. 14, 15. ‡ Ibid. xxv. 7——14. § Pſalm cvi. 30.

Wrath, or Judgment of God falling upon our Heads for it: Saying, *Neither let us commit Fornication, as ſome of them committed; and fell in one Day three and twenty Thouſand*, 1 Cor. x. 8. SERM. VI.

Theſe are ſome of the chief Judgments of God upon Whoremongers and Adulterers in this Life, as to their Bodies, and their worldly State; that they are frequently brought by that great Wickedneſs into Poverty, and Shame, and Trouble, and Pain, and Sickneſs, and to an untimely Death; and moreover into Hatred, and Strife; and ſometimes to Murder, or to a violent Death.

But the ſevereſt Puniſhments or Judgments of God, which Whoremongers and Adulterers do, or can ſuffer in this World, are thoſe which they feel in their Souls; as I am now, in the fifth and laſt Place, to ſhew: That

God does remarkably judge, and puniſh all wicked Doers, and particularly Whoremongers and Adulterers, as much or more

Serm. VI. than any others, by grievouſly afflicting them in their Souls; by cauſing them to bear the Burden of their Sin and Guilt, ſo long as they live; until they repent, and leave it off. Which muſt be a ſad Affliction, or ſore Judgment of God upon them; to carry an evil Heart, or a wounded Spirit, and a guilty Conſcience always along with them, whereſoever they go. And in Compariſon of which, all thoſe other Judgments of God, upon Whoremongers and Adulterers, before mention'd; I mean, thoſe worldly Afflictions, and bodily Puniſhments, which God often lays upon this Kind of evil Doers, for their Sinfulneſs; ſuch as Poverty and Shame, Trouble and Pain, Strife and Hatred, Sickneſſes and Diſeaſes, and ſuch like Evils of the outward Man, which ſuch wicked Doers frequently bring upon themſelves in this World, by their Lewdneſs and Luſtfulneſs; yet, all theſe outward Evils of the Body are little, or nothing, in Compariſon of thoſe inward Afflictions of the Soul; of that horrible Dread and Anguiſh, of that inward Grief and Pain, of that Load of Guilt and Sin, which all lewd and looſe Livers lie under,

until

until they repent, and leave off their Wickedneſs; in Compariſon, I ſay, of theſe ſad Things which they ſuffer in their Souls, for their Sins of Whoredom and Adultery, all thoſe other common Calamities, relating to the Body and to the World, which are uſually ſent of God, as a natural and a juſt Judgment upon Whoremongers and Adulterers; yet all ſuch evil Things, which chiefly concern the filthy and diſorder'd Body of a Whoremonger, are nothing to thoſe which his defil'd and wounded Soul ſuffers, and is heavy laden with. And which indeed a Man muſt be very much harden'd in his Sin, to be able to bear; or which, however, are harder to be borne than all the other Troubles, which any Man can meet with in this World; yea, much harder than all the Calamities of *Job*. For tho' *Job* was remarkable to a Proverb, for the Loſſes and Troubles that he met with in the World, and for his Sores and Sufferings in the Body; yet they were all tolerable in Compariſon of the Troubles, and Torments, of the guilty Conſcience of an Whoremonger, and Adulterer, or any other notorious evil Doer: SERM. VI.

Serm. VI. Becauſe, tho' all *Job*'s worldly Goods were deſtroy'd and loſt, yet he had not loſt the Comfort of a good Conſcience; and tho' all his Children alſo were dead, yet his Hope was in the living God; and tho' his Body withal was full of Sores, yet his Soul was ſound, and his Life was whole within him: Which Soundneſs and Integrity of his Heart, with the Comfort that he had in his Conſcience and in the Lord his God, made him the eaſier, and to bear his worldly Troubles the better. For worldly Troubles, and bodily Sores and Sickneſſes, how great ſoever, are not nigh ſo grievous, as thoſe of the Soul; which, I ſay, made *Job* bear his outward Loſſes, and the Sores of his Body the better, becauſe he was well within; becauſe his Heart was ſound, his Soul unhurt, and his Conſcience perfectly eaſy, becauſe of his Integrity, and that he had kept himſelf unſpotted from the World. Which Condition, I ſay, of *Job* in all his Troubles, was much more tolerable than the vain and miſerable Life of Whoremongers, and Adulterers, and ſuch like evil Doers, in all their ſinful Luſts and Pleaſures, becauſe of their Wounds and

Sores

Sores within; by reaſon of the Filthineſs of their Lives, and the Guiltineſs of their Conſciences. And therefore St. *Paul*, when he was once paſſing Judgment upon a Man, for a moſt heinous Kind of Whoredom, or Fornication, he thought fit, that the Man ſhould be put to ſome outward Shame or Trouble, that his Heart might be humbled, and turn'd from his Iniquity; and ſo his Conſcience might be heal'd, and eas'd of the Guilt and Burden of it. And this is the Way, that we ourſelves alſo take with evil Doers, by putting them to ſome Pain or Shame, or Charge or Trouble, in order to break them of their Sins; as rightly judging, that it is much worſe to let a Man go on in his Wickedneſs, than any Puniſhment that can be laid upon him, to break him of it. And this was St. *Paul*'s Opinion in that Caſe; and therefore he order'd, that the Man, who had done ſuch a wicked Thing, ſhould be excommunicated, or turn'd out of the Church, from the Society of the Saints, and be made like a Publican or Heathen; that he might learn to know what a bleſſed Privilege, or Happineſs it was, to be a true or a good

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Chriſ-

SERM. VI. Chriſtian, and of the Communion of Saints. And therefore the Apoſtle order'd that wicked, inceſtuous Perſon, to be deliver'd over unto Satan; to be ſome Way or other tormented, or afflicted in his Body, to the puniſhing and mortifying of the Fleſh; that by ſuch a Suffering he might be humbled, and made ſenſible of his Sin, and truly penitent for it, to the healing and ſaving of his Soul. *To deliver ſuch a one*, ſays the Apoſtle, *unto Satan for the Deſtruction of the Fleſh, that the Spirit may be ſaved, in the Day of the Lord Jeſus*, 1 Cor. v. 1——6. And indeed it ſignifies not much, how ill the Body ſuffers in this World, ſo long as the precious Life be but ſpar'd; and the Soul be but eaſy, whole, and ſafe.

And therefore the Sins of Whoredom and Adultery are the more grievous, not ſo much for the common Miſchief, and Trouble, that they often bring a Man to in this World; not ſo much for the Blot that they bring upon his Name, nor for the Waſte that they make of his Goods, nor for the Harm that they do him in his Body, as for

for the Evils which they bring upon his Soul. For when a Man's Soul, or Spirit, which ſhould bear his Infirmities, or which ſhould enable him to bear up againſt his other Troubles; when that is caſt down, or has greater Troubles of its own, and of its own bringing upon itſelf thro' the Guilt of its Sins, ſuch as Whoredom and Adultery, which it hath given way to; then, ſuch a one's Caſe muſt be very ſad, and hard to be borne. For, as it is ſaid, *The Spirit of a Man will ſuſtain his Infirmity; but a wounded Spirit who can bear?* Prov. xviii. 14. This is a ſad Caſe indeed; when a Man's Boſom-friend, which ſhould be his greateſt Comfort, is his greateſt Torment, or his greateſt Plague; but this is the Plague of an evil Conſcience, or, what the Scripture calls, *the Plague of a Man's own Heart* *; which is the greateſt Plague of all. But this is the Miſchief of all Sins, particularly thoſe of Whoredom and Adultery, that they do not only wound, and weaken, and diſorder the Body; but eſpecially that they greatly diſorder, and wound, and endanger the utter Deſtruction

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* 1 Kings viii. 38.

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tion of the Soul. And therefore the Apoſtle earneſtly adviſeth us, if we regard the Happineſs of our Souls, or of ourſelves, to take care, for the ſmall Time that we ſojourn in this World, to keep ourſelves unſpotted from it, or from the evil Cuſtoms of it; and, while we live in the Fleſh, to keep ourſelves as blameleſs, and as harmleſs, as we can, from the Luſts thereof. For, ſays he, *Dearly Beloved, I beſeech you, as Strangers and Pilgrims, abſtain from fleſhly Luſts, which war againſt the Soul,* 1 Pet. ii. 11.

The Luſts of the Fleſh do ſo much war againſt the Soul, and are ſuch utter Enemies to it, that they are continually weakning and wounding it; for the Soul of Man is of ſuch a pure and ſpiritual nature of itſelf, that by being defil'd, and tainted, with filthy and fleſhly Luſts, it muſt receive a great deal of Harm, if not a thorough Change, and an utter Deſtruction; as if there was left no ſuch Thing as a pure Spirit, or a heaven-born Soul, in the filthy Body of a Whoremonger, and Adulterer. And therefore that ſhort Sentence of

of the Prophet ſhould be noted as a Pro- SERM. verb; where he ſays, that, *Whoredom, and* VI. *Wine, and new Wine take away the Heart*, Hoſ. iv. 11. For as we may often ſee, that Exceſs of Wine, or of ſtrong Drink, does take away a Man's Underſtanding, Reaſon, and Senſes; and makes him unfit for any Company or Buſineſs, as if he had not the Soul of a Man in him; ſo Whoredom and Adultery do ſo greatly diſorder, and dull, and ſtupify a Man's Soul, as to all Matters of Religion and Virtue, that he can't rightly ſavour any Thing that is good; and thereby do take away the Heart of a Man from God, and God's Love from him. For, as *Jehu* ſaid unto *Joram*, *What Peace*, that is, for thee and thy Houſe, *ſo long as the Whoredoms of thy Mother* Jeſabel, *and her Witchcrafts are ſo many?* 2 Kings ix. 22. So what Favour, or Peace, can a Man expect, either from God or in his own Conſcience, ſo long as he indulges himſelf in the offenſive Sins of Whoredom and Adultery? Which therefore ought to be avoided, not ſo much for the Hurt that they do to the Body, as for the Damage that they do to the Soul; and

not

Serm. VI. not ſo much for the Shame among Men, as for the Offence of them, and Sin againſt God. And this is the Reaſon which *Joſeph* gave to his Miſtreſs, when ſhe baſely tempted him to lie with her. *How*, ſays he, *can I do this great Wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God?* Gen. xxxix. 9. By which it ſeems, as if *Joſeph* thought that the worldly Shame, or bodily Puniſhment, or painful Death, that he might have been brought to, if he had been found guilty of ſuch a foul Crime, were not worthy to be mention'd, or compar'd to the Sin of doing ſuch a baſe Thing; ſo diſpleaſing to God, and ſo hurtful to his own Soul.

For as God is a moſt pure and holy Spirit himſelf, ſo he did make the Soul of Man in his own Image, after his * Likeneſs; ſo that, nothing can be more contrary to God's perfect, ſpotleſs Nature, nor doth more defile and deface the Image of God in Man, nor doth worſe grieve the holy Spirit of God, than the Luſts of Laſciviouſneſs. For theſe were the very Sins, that did give that great Offence to God, and

* Gen. i. 26, 27. And v. 1.

and ſo ſorely grieved his holy Spirit, that he even repented, that he had made Man upon the Earth. As it is ſaid, that, *The Sons of God went in unto the Daughters of Men, and they bare Children unto them. And God ſaw, that the Wickedneſs of Man was great in the Earth; and that every Imagination of the Thoughts of his Heart was only Evil continually; and it repented the Lord, that he had made Man upon the Earth, and it grieved him at his Heart,* Gen. vi. 4, 5, 6. SERM. VI.

From all which it appears, that theſe heinous Sins, of Whoredom and Adultery, are ſo grievous to God's holy Spirit, and ſo prejudicial to a Man's own Soul, that there can be no Peace to ſuch wicked People; no Quiet or Comfort in their Minds; or rather, nothing but Confuſion, Terror, and Torment all their Life, ſo long as they live in their Sins. And at laſt, if they will not repent and amend their Lives, there remains nothing for them, but a fearful looking-for of Judgment. As I will ſhew in the next Diſcourſe; that the moſt terrible Way of God's judging Whoremongers

SERM. VI. and Adulterers, will be in the World to come. And, for the preſent, ſhall yet add ſomething more, by way of Application, concerning the Matter that hath now been treated of. And that is,

That we ſhould keep ourſelves as clear as we can of all Sins, eſpecially thoſe of Whoredom and Adultery, for the exceeding Sinfulneſs of them; for the great Offence they are unto God, the great Injury they do unto others, and the great Miſchief they bring upon ourſelves; and that, not only to our Bodies, but alſo to our Souls; which we ought to be more tender of, than of our Bodies. We ought, I ſay, to be more tender of our Souls, than of our Bodies; and more afraid of every Thing that would wound the Soul, than of any Thing that can only hurt the Body. Or, as our Bleſſed Saviour adviſes us, *Not ſo much to fear them, which are able only to hurt, or kill the Body; as to fear him,* that is, Almighty God, *who is able to deſtroy, or torment the Soul eternally in Hell,* Matt. x. 28. So, we ſhould not be ſo much afraid of any Thing that can happen to us in this World;

World; as, of being brought into Straits, or into any outward Calamities; or of any Thing that we can ſuffer in the Body, either by Pain, or Sores, or Sickneſſes; as of the Troubles of the Soul; of the Pain, and Grief, and Dread of a guilty Conſcience. For if we can but keep a good Conſcience, and a true Faith within us, it will be like a ſtrong Mountain unto us; and will make us able to bear any Thing, and even to overcome every Thing, how hard or troubleſome ſoever, that we may meet with in the World; for it will ſo greatly eſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, and comfort our Hearts, that we ſhall be above the World, and every Thing that can happen to us in it. As St. *John* aſſures us, ſaying, *This is the Victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith* *, that is, *a true Faith, which worketh by* † *Love*, and is accompanied with good Works, and with a good Conſcience. This is the Victory, or this is the Defence, and Armour of a good Chriſtian; wherewith he is able to bear up againſt the World; and even to overcome all Oppoſi-

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* 1 John v. 4. † Gal. v. 6.

SERM. VI. tion, whether of the World, the Fleſh, or the Devil. As St. *Paul* encourages *Timothy* with it; ſaying, *That thou by them mighteſt war a good Warfare; holding Faith, and a good Conſcience*, 1 Tim. i, 18, 19.

And therefore let us all ſtrive, as much as lieth in us, to keep always a good Conſcience within us, void of Offence; that is, of all Wickedneſs, both of the Luſts of the Fleſh, and of all the evil Cuſtoms of the World. And then all the Afflictions, that we may meet with in the World, will ſeem light unto us; and all the Pains and Diſorders, that we may feel in the Body, will be made eaſy, by the ſuperior Power and Peace of our Minds. Or if any Temptations, or Troubles, do ſometimes ariſe in our Minds, the Teſtimony of a good Conſcience within us will quite remove them; or will enable us to reſiſt, and overcome them; or will make us tolerably eaſy under them. For how can our Souls be caſt down, or diſquieted within us; what can we be afraid of, or what can we be much troubled at? when our Hearts do not condemn, but comfort us; and when God him-

himſelf bids us be of good Cheer, and ſpeaks Peace to our Souls; by aſſuring us, that while our Hearts are right towards him, and our Ways pleaſing unto him, he will love us, and bleſs us, ſo long as we live in this World; and when he thinks fit to take us out of this World, he will take us into a much happier Place above. And therefore, to conclude with that Saying of the Apoſtle; * *Let us comfort ourſelves with theſe Words.*

SERM. VI.

* 1 Theſſ. iv. 18.

SERMON VII.

God's Judgments againſt Whoremongers and Adulterers.

HEB. xiii. 4.

——Whoremongers, and Adulterers, God will judge.

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I HAVE already ſhewn, from this latter Part of the Verſe, how much Whoremongers and Adulterers do frequently ſuffer by their Sins, even in this Life; what Troubles they bring upon themſelves in this World, what great Diſorders in their Bodies, and what Damage to their Souls; by defiling the pure Soul, with their polluted Bodies; and by loading it with Guilt, and Shame, and

and Sorrow; whereby they can't but be often very uneaſy in their Minds, and unhappy in their Lives; to think of their ſtrange Way of Living, and of the End of it, which is the terrible Judgment of God. For beſides the many Ways which Whoremongers and Adulterers are puniſh'd for their Wickedneſs in this World; yet, if theſe Things will not break them off their Sins, they will be moſt terribly puniſh'd for them in the World to come. And this is what the Apoſtle chiefly means in the Text, *that Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge*; that is, that by theſe wicked Ways of theirs they do bring themſelves in Danger of God's Judgment, and of everlaſting Puniſhment. And this is all that now remains of the Text to be treated of; and that is, The great Danger that Whoremongers, and Adulterers are in of the Judgment to come; that if they will not break off their Sins, which they are ſo unwilling to do; that then, God will moſt ſeverely judge, and puniſh them in the World to come. Which Doctrine I will endeavour to explain, and prove from theſe two following Particulars:

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Firſt, From their great Backwardneſs and Unwillingneſs, or the great Difficulty that Whoremongers and Adulterers, as much or more than any other evil Doers, do make of repenting, and leaving off their Sins. And,

Secondly, From the great Certainty, that, if they will not repent and amend their Lives, they ſhall be brought to the Judgment-Seat of God; to be condemn'd, and puniſh'd eternally.

Firſt, I am to ſhew what great Danger all Whoremongers, and Adulterers, are in of the Judgment to come; from their great Backwardneſs and Unwillingneſs, or the great Difficulty that Whoremongers and Adulterers, as much or more than any other evil Doers, do make of repenting, and leaving off their Sins.

It is indeed no Wonder, that they are ſo backward to give it over, when they were at firſt ſo bold as to go about ſo great a Wick-

Wickedneſs; and that they are not much aſham'd of it afterwards, when they had ſo little Shame in them as to commit it. For a Man muſt be very viciouſly inclin'd, and daringly wicked, that dares venture upon ſuch an heinous Sin, againſt all the Reſtraints that are laid upon us all to the contrary; not only by our holy Chriſtian Religion, but even by our Reaſon; and alſo by that Principle of Modeſty, which ſeems to be purpoſely planted in our Natures, to reſtrain us from all ſhameful Actions, eſpecially from the Sins of Whoredom and Adultery; which are directly contrary to Modeſty, as it has a Regard to Purity and Innocency; and likewiſe as it is inclin'd to Fear, and to have ſome Regard to a Privacy in Sinning. But Whoremongers and Adulterers can't Sin ſo privately, as no Body to know it; becauſe a Man can't be given to Whoredom, and Adultery, without a Companion in Iniquity; beſides other Agents, and Promoters of his Wickedneſs; which is a great Aggravation of this Sin, above moſt others, that a Man can't be guilty of it by himſelf; that he can't be wicked alone, but muſt make

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another as wicked as himſelf; that he can't go about to ruin himſelf, but he muſt draw on another to Ruin with him: Which, I ſay, is a great Aggravation of theſe Sins of Whoredom and Adultery, above moſt others. For it is a ſad Thing, to be Partakers of other Mens Sins; and a worſe Thing, to draw in others to be Partakers with us in ours; which all Whoremongers and Adulterers do. And therefore, I ſay, when they are ſo bold, and ſo wicked, as to do this; it is no Wonder that they go on in their Wickedneſs, and rather grow worſe and worſe in it; even ſo far, as to ſtick at no other Wickedneſs that lies in their Way to it, or that their Heart luſteth after. And this King *David* had too ſad Experience of in himſelf; for tho' he had all along ſhewn himſelf a good Man, and a merciful King; till that Time that he gave Way to the Temptations, and Inclinations of this Kind; whereby he was not only drawn into the great Sin of Adultery, but his Adultery did put him upon committing Murder alſo. As we may read in the 11th Chapter of the 2d of *Samuel*. And thus was King *David* led on from one Sin to another, from leſs to

to more, even to greater and greater; as from looking and luſting after a Woman's Beauty, he fell to Adultery; and from Adultery to Murder. SERM. VII.

This indeed is the Nature of moſt Sins, eſpecially thoſe of Whoredom and Adultery; that when any Perſons are once given to them, they know not when they ſhall give them over, nor what other Sins they may be drawn into thereby; even to grow more and more wicked every Way, ſo as to fall from one Wickedneſs to another, till they be quite overrun with Iniquity. For one Iniquity, and one Miſchief, generally follows another; eſpecially, when they are led on by Laſciviouſneſs: As the Apoſtle in his Epiſtle to the *Romans* tells them, what a ſad ſinful Condition they were formerly in, before they turn'd Chriſtians, by Reaſon of their Whoredoms, and their other * abominable Acts of Uncleanneſs. For ſays he, *Ye have yielded your Members Servants to Uncleanneſs, and to Iniquity unto Iniquity*, Rom. vi. 19.

And

* Rom. i. 24——32.

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And tho' there are but too many, who are deſperately wicked, that chuſe and delight in this endleſs Way of *Sinning, as it were with a Cart-Rope*, as the Prophet * calls it; that is, in an high Degree, or in a continual Courſe of Wickedneſs; to be drawn on, as it were with a Chain or a Cart-Rope, from one Sin to another; and to have their Liberty, and to take their Fill of Wickedneſs; yet it is a moſt dangerous, and deſperate State of Soul, to be thus wickedly inclin'd, to add Sin to Sin, till there be no End; till there be no Time or Place for Repentance, no Signs of Amendment, and no Room for God's Righteouſneſs and Mercy. Which the *Pſalmiſt* mentions as one of the greateſt Judgments, or Curſes of God upon Sinners; to give them over to themſelves to live after their own Hearts Luſts; *to add Iniquity to Iniquity; and not to let them come into his Righteouſneſs*, Pſalm lxix. 22.

And yet, when any ſuch great Sinners, as Whoremongers, and Adulterers, and many

* Iſaiah v. 18.

many others, are left to themſelves, to follow their own vain Imaginations, and to be drawn away by their own Hearts Luſts; they often get ſuch an Habit of Sin and Corruption, that they can never leave off their ſhameful Way of Living, or have no Heart to do it. As the Holy Scriptures take Notice, that there are ſome ſo lewdly and viciouſly inclin'd, that they cannot, or will not, give over ſinning; but rather Sin every Way, both with their Souls and Bodies, both with their Hearts and Eyes, and all: Saying, *They have Eyes full of Adultery, which can't ceaſe from Sin*, 2 Pet. ii. 14. That is, they have been ſo much us'd to it, and have ſuch a Delight therein, to go on in their Wickedneſs without Controul, and from one Sin to another, that they are even enſlav'd and harden'd in their Sins; ſo as to be paſt all Thoughts of Repentance, and all Hopes of Happineſs. Which is the worſt Condition under the Sun, or on this Side of Hell.

This is the miſchievous Nature of Sin, eſpecially of ſuch heinous Sins as Whoredom and Adultery, that they do ſo grievouſly

SERM. VII. ouſly burden the Soul with Guilt, until they repent; and do ſo ſadly afflict and caſt down the Soul, when they come to repent; and, what is worſt of all, do often ſo deeply wound, and defile, and corrupt the Soul, that they cannot repent, and leave off their abominable ſinful Luſts: And ſo, they have nothing left them to look for, but the fearful Looking for the Judgment to come; which is the laſt, and terribleſt Judgment of God, upon Whoremongers and Adulterers.

As I will now ſhew, from the laſt Thing to be conſider'd; and which is the chief Thing, that the Apoſtle means by theſe Words of the Text; *Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge.* That is, if they will not repent and amend their Lives, God will bring them at the laſt Day to his Judgment-Seat, and will condemn them to everlaſting Torments.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, hath ſo great a Regard for the Work of his own Hands, eſpecially for Man, the Excellency of his Works; and that, not only for

for the Soul of Man, which he hath made in his own Image; but alſo for the Body, which he made his Temple, for his Holy Spirit to dwell in; that whoſoever doth pollute himſelf with the filthy Sins of Whoredom and Adultery, God will be ſo very angry with him, as to be fit to caſt him away from his Preſence, or out of his Favour, and to take his Holy Spirit from him. However, if he goes on indulging and defiling himſelf in his Wickedneſs, ſo as to grieve and drive away the Holy Spirit of God from him; then he will be in great Danger of the Judgment, and of being ruin'd for ever; by making himſelf fit for the unclean Spirit to enter into him, and fill him full of all Iniquities, and bring him to Deſtruction both of Body and Soul. For ſays the Apoſtle, *Know ye not, that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. If a Man defile the Temple of God, him will God deſtroy; for the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are,* 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. By which is meant, That whoſoever defileth the Temple of God, which is his own Body, by Whoredom; him will God deſtroy, and that, with an

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SERM. VII. an utter Deſtruction; not ſo much with the Deſtruction of his worldly Goods, or with the Decay and Death of his Body, as with the Deſtruction of his Soul eternally. For thoſe Judgments, which God frequently takes upon Whoremongers and Adulterers in this World, do not ſuffice for the Puniſhment of their Sins; but, except they repent, they ſhall be deſtroy'd for ever. *Even*, ſays St. *Jude*, *as* Sodom, *and* Gomorrah, *and the Cities about them, giving themſelves over to Fornication, and going after ſtrange Fleſh, are ſet forth for an Example; ſuffering the Vengeance of eternal Fire.* As we read in the 7th Verſe of the Epiſtle of St. *Jude*. So that it ſeems, as if the Fire, which fell down from Heaven upon thoſe lewd People, were not all the Puniſhment, that God propoſed to take upon them; but only was the Forerunner of the Vengeance of eternal Fire; which they ſhould feel afterwards in Hell. Even as thoſe few righteous Perſons, *Lot* and his Relations, who, by the Grace and Mercy of God, were deliver'd out of the Temptations, and Sins, and Sufferings of that evil, and adulterous Generation; were thereby

pre-

preſerv'd, as Veſſels of Mercy, unto the Bleſſedneſs of the Kingdom of Heaven. So, on the contrary, all thoſe abominable wicked People that were deſtroy'd, eſpecially thoſe which walk'd after the Luſts of the Fleſh, which brought down the Fire from Heaven upon them, they were not puniſh'd enough thereby; but are ſtill reſerv'd to undergo the Judgment of the great Day, to be then condemn'd to everlaſting Flames. As it is more fully, and plainly expreſs'd by St. *Peter*, to this Purpoſe; ſaying, *God turning the Cities of* Sodom *and* Gomorrah *into Aſhes, condemn'd them with an utter Overthrow; making them an Example unto thoſe, that afterwards ſhall live ungodly. And deliver'd juſt* Lot, *vexed with the filthy Converſation of the Wicked: For that righteous Man, dwelling among them, in ſeeing and hearing vex'd his righteous Soul, Day by Day, with their unlawful Deeds. The Lord knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of Temptations, and to reſerve the Unjuſt unto the Day of Judgment to be puniſh'd; but chiefly,* ſays he, *them that walk after the Fleſh, in the Luſts of Uncleanneſs,* 2 Pet. ii. 6—11. By which we may ſee, that how ſorely ſo- SERM. VII.

Serm. VII. ever Whoremongers and Adulterers, or any other evil Doers, may ſuffer for their Sins in this World; yet if, for all this, they will ſtill go on in the ſame lewd Courſes, or in any other wicked Ways, they ſhall ſuffer nevertheleſs hereafter, with the People of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, the Vengeance of eternal Fire; reſorting to their Brethren in Iniquity, and going to their own Place. For without the Purifying of Repentance, and the Waſhing of Regeneration, no filthy lewd People are fit to be receiv'd into that holy Place, into the Divine Preſence of Almighty God in Heaven. For there, as St. *John* ſays, *There ſhall in no wiſe enter into it any Thing that defileth, neither whatſoever worketh Abomination, or maketh a Lie*, Rev. xxi. 27.

It is indeed but fitting, and juſt with God, that thoſe vicious and vile Perſons, in whoſe luſtful Hearts there is left no Room for the Grace, and Holy Spirit of God to abide; that they ſhould have no abiding Place, or Portion in the Kingdom of God. As the Apoſtle puts us in Mind of it, as a common or well known Truth; ſaying,

This

This ye know, that no Whoremonger, nor unclean Perſon, nor covetous Man, who is an Idolater, hath any Inheritance in the Kingdom of God, and of Chriſt, Epheſ. v. 5. Yea, how can any ſuch Perſons, who live after their fleſhly Luſts, expect it; or think themſelves worthy to be receiv'd among the innumerable Company of Saints, and Angels in Heaven; into that bleſſed Aſſembly of juſt Men made perfect, and of Jeſus, the immaculate Lamb, the great Judge of all? No, there ſhall never any ſuch come thither, without a true Repentance, who walk after the Sins of the Fleſh; among which the Sins of Uncleanneſs, of Adultery and Fornication, are reckon'd the firſt, or the chief. For, ſays the Apoſtle, *The Works of the Fleſh are manifeſt, which are theſe; Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, Laſciviouſneſs; Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Hereſies, Envyings, Murders, Drunkenneſs, Revellings, and ſuch like; of the which I tell you before, as I have alſo told you in Time paſt, that they which do ſuch Things ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, Gal. v. 19, 20, 21.

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Here the Apoſtle tells us, that none ſuch ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God, who are guilty of any of the aforeſaid Crimes; that is, who live, and abide in them without Repentance, and Newneſs of Life. For this, we may be ſure, is the Meaning of the Apoſtle in this Place; or elſe, we might all ſorrowfully ſay; *Who then can be ſaved?* As our Bleſſed Saviour's Diſciples once ſaid unto him upon another Occaſion. For when he was plainly telling them, *How hard a Thing it was for them that had Riches, or that truſted in their Riches, to enter into the Kingdom of God; they were aſtoniſh'd above Meaſure, and ſaid, Who then can be ſaved?* For the Diſciples knew, that tho' all People were not rich; yet that almoſt all People did greatly labour, and long after Riches; or did envy thoſe that were rich; or that there were ſcarce any, but who would be glad to be rich themſelves. And therefore ſaid they, *Who then can be ſaved?* Our Bleſſed Saviour anſwer'd them, ſaying; *With Men it is impoſſible, but not with God; for with God all Things are poſſible*, Mark x. 21—28. For tho' frail

frail mortal Men have not ſo much Help or Strength, or ſo much Grace and Goodneſs in them, as to be perfectly able of themſelves to moderate their Inclinations, and to ſave their Souls; but have all very often ſin'd, and do yet ſin, or come ſhort of their Duty, and of the Glory of God; tho' all Men, I ſay, are ſometimes committing ſuch Crimes, or overtaken in ſuch Faults, or ſubject to ſuch Failings, or loving and longing after ſuch Things, as would endanger their Salvation; yet by the Grace of God aſſiſting, and promoting their pious, tho' weak, Endeavours, any People, that are well inclin'd, may repent, and leave off their Sins: And ſo, by the Mercy of God, and the Merits of Chriſt, they may poſſibly, yea, they will moſt certainly be ſav'd. Or elſe we might ſay, in the Caſe before us, as our Bleſſed Saviour's Diſciples then ſaid unto him; *Who then can be ſaved?* For if all they, that ever did any of theſe Works of the Fleſh, were to be ſhut out of the Kingdom of Heaven, whether they repented ſincerely, and left off their Sins entirely, or not; then, indeed, we might well ſay, *Who then can be ſaved?* Becauſe, tho' few SERM. VII.

Serm. VII. Perſons, eſpecially few Chriſtians, are guilty of thoſe moſt abominable Sins of Idolatry, or Witchcraft, or Hereſy, or Murder; and tho' all People are not given to thoſe other very heinous Sins of Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, Laſciviouſneſs, Drunkenneſs, Revellings, and the like; yet, who is there, even among the beſt Chriſtians, that one Time or other hath not been guilty, more or leſs, of ſome of thoſe other Sins there mention'd; ſuch as Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Envying, and the like; which alſo are great Sins, and yet there is ſcarce any one, but what hath been guilty of ſome of them in his Life-time. And therefore, if every one, that hath ever been guilty of any of them, tho' he hath ſorrowfully repented of them, and hath quite left them off; if he was, notwithſtanding, to be debarr'd the Kingdom of God; then we might with Aſtoniſhment ſay, *Who then can be ſaved?* But the Meaning of the Apoſtle, in that Place, muſt be this; That whoſoever is given to the leaſt of theſe Works of the Fleſh, except he repent, and leave them off, ſhall moſt certainly periſh. Whereas, on the contrary, they that do bring

bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance, tho' they have been very great Sinners, ſhall as certainly be ſav'd. For this is the Burden, or the glad Tidings of the Goſpel, even the comfortable Doctrine of Repentance, and Remiſſion of Sins; that whoſoever believeth, and repenteth, and amendeth his Life, ſhall be ſaved. SERM. VII.

This is our great Happineſs in Chriſt; that, as St. *John* ſays, *If any Man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous; who is the Propitiation for our Sins.* That, if we will but forſake them, they ſhall be forgiven us, for the Sake of *our Bleſſed Saviour's* * *Blood; which was ſhed for many*; even for all true penitent Sinners; as an Atonement, or *for the Remiſſion of their Sins*, 1 John ii. 1, 2. And tho' ſome Sins, indeed, are much more heinous than others; ſuch as Murder, Adultery, Fornication, and the like; yet, if thoſe that have been guilty thereof will but truly repent, and forſake them, they ſhall be fully forgiven them. As our moſt gracious and merciful God, the better to

* Matt. xxvi. 28.

SERM. VII. encourage us in this moſt neceſſary Duty of Repentance, hath plainly declar'd by one of his Prophets; ſaying, *Waſh ye, make you clean; put away the Evil of your Doings from before mine Eyes; ceaſe to do Evil, learn to do well; come then, and tho' your Sins be as Scarlet, they ſhall be as white as Snow; and tho' they be red, like Crimſon, they ſhall be as Wool*, Iſaiah i. 16, 17, 18. And tho' ſome Sins alſo, eſpecially thoſe of Uncleanneſs, ſuch as Whoredom and Adultery, are much more filthy and odious than others; yet all thoſe that have been guilty thereof, by a true Faith, and a ſincere Repentance, may be cleans'd, and may be ſanctify'd, by the moſt precious Blood of Chriſt. For, it is that *Fountain*, which the Prophet foretold, *was to be open'd for Sin, and for Uncleanneſs*, Zech. xiii. 1.

By all which we may ſee the Virtue, and the Value, of the precious Blood of our Bleſſed Saviour Chriſt; whereby all thoſe that have been the greateſt Tranſgreſſors, if they will but repent, and amend their Lives, ſhall not only be forgiven, but alſo made

made clean from all their Iniquities; how heinous, and odious ſoever they are. SERM. VII.

And hereby alſo we may ſee the infinite Goodneſs, and Mercy of God, towards vile and ſinful Men; that he would have none to periſh, but rather, that all ſhould come to Repentance, and be ſav'd from their Sins.

And, finally, hereby alſo we may ſee the exceeding Sinfulneſs of theſe Sins, of Whoredom and Adultery, and the extreme Hatred of God againſt them; that without ſincerely forſaking them, there is no Forgiveneſs of them with God. That if ſuch ſhameful wicked People will not leave off their odious Sins of Uncleanneſs, and Laſciviouſneſs, of Whoredom and Adultery; God will moſt certainly judge, and moſt ſeverely puniſh them. And that, not ſo much in this World, as in the World to come; which is the moſt proper Time, and Place, for Judgment. And this is what we are to underſtand, and believe, by this Saying in the Text; that *Whoremongers, and Adulterers, God will judge.*

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Now, the right Application of this Doctrine is this; That we ſhould all be brought thereby to hate, and avoid, all ſuch heinous Sins, ſuch as Whoredom and Adultery, which do bring all thoſe that are given thereunto, in ſo great Danger of God's Judgment. And therefore it more nearly concerns all ſuch, as have been guilty of any Sins of this Kind, to take the greater Heed to themſelves; to follow the good Advice, which our Bleſſed Saviour once gave to a Woman taken in Adultery; *To go, and ſin no more* *; and then, neither he, nor any Body elſe would condemn her. So all thoſe, that have ſometimes ſin'd this Way, ought to be the more careful of themſelves, to do no more ſo wickedly; that they may eſcape the Judgment of God. Yea, the more that any Perſon has been guilty this Way, the more penitent he ought to be, and the more given to Seriouſneſs, and Godlineſs ever after. As penitent King *David* was; and as St. *Paul* adviſes the People of *Rome*; who, before they turn'd Chriſtians, had been a very vicious

* John viii. 10, 11.

cious People, given to all Manner of Wickedneſs *, eſpecially to the Sins of Uncleanneſs; he therefore adviſes them, for the Time to come, to give their Minds ſo much the more to Righteouſneſs, and Holineſs: Saying, *As ye have yielded your Members to Uncleanneſs, and to Iniquity unto Iniquity; even ſo now yield your Members to Righteouſneſs unto Holineſs*, Rom. vi. 19. SERM. VII.

And as for all others who are yet innocent, and free from theſe baſe Sins, of Whoredom and Adultery; they have great Cauſe to be very glad, and have the greater Encouragement to keep themſelves ſo; from the great Comfort that they have in their own Virtue, and Innocency; and from the ſad Condition of thoſe, that are enſlav'd to theſe Sins; which ſhould be a Warning to all others, to look the more diligently to themſelves; leſt they alſo fall into the ſame Crime, and Condemnation.

For all Men are made of the ſame corrupt Fleſh, and deceitful Hearts; yea, the beſt Chriſtians of all are of the ſame Paſſions,

* Rom. i. 21—32.

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ſions, and Inclinations with other Men; which does keep them humble, and makes them careful of themſelves; when they find by themſelves, how the Fleſh warreth, and luſteth againſt the Spirit *; which, I ſay, humbles them, and makes them know themſelves to be but frail Men; and therefore are not ſo apt to grow proud of their own Righteouſneſs, or Goodneſs. As St. *Paul* freely makes this Confeſſion for himſelf; ſaying, *Leſt I ſhould be exalted above Meaſure, there was given me a Thorn in the Fleſh, the Meſſenger of Satan, to buffet me; leſt I ſhould be exalted above Meaſure*, 2 Cor. xii. 7. And all other Men, even of the greateſt Virtue, and of the ſtricteſt Piety, have ſuch Thorns given them in the Fleſh to humble them, and to prove them; and to make them the more watchful over their Hearts, and Lives. Or elſe, they would be like other wicked Men; but that, by their own great Carefulneſs and Diligence, together with the Grace and Bleſſing of God, they do keep their Luſts, and Paſſions, and their Bodies in Subjection unto them. As St. *Paul* hath told us, what a great deal of

* Gal. v. 17.

of Care, and Pains, he took with himſelf this Way: Saying, *But I keep my Body under, and bring it into Subjection; leſt that, by any Means, when I have preach'd to others, I myſelf ſhould be a Caſt-away,* 1 Cor. ix. 29. And, in like Manner, all other virtuous, and prudent Men, have been always very careful to keep under their Bodies; and even to keep a ſtrict Guard over all their Senſes. As holy *Job* alſo declares, that he did; ſaying, *I made a Covenant with mine Eyes; why then ſhould I think on a Maid?* Job xxxi. 1. And well might he, and all others, that would live innocently, make a Covenant with their Eyes; becauſe many Men, even the good King *David* himſelf, was firſt led into Adultery by his Eyes; which might be the Occaſion of that humble Petition of his unto God; ſaying, *Turn away mine Eyes from beholding Vanity; and quicken thou me in thy Way,* Pſalm cxix. 37. SERM. VII.

And therefore, I ſay, it greatly behoves us all, to be very watchful over our whole ſelves; as, over our Souls, that they incline not to any evil Thing; and over our Bo-

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dies, that we keep them in Subjection; and over all our Senſes, that they lead us not into Sin. Or elſe, it is not eaſy for any of us to be kept innocent; yea, it would be ſtrange, if we ſhould. For it is no Wonder, if ſuch People as are careleſs of themſelves, or rather, tempt themſelves to Laſciviouſneſs; by giving themſelves up to Eaſe, and Sloth; by indulging themſelves, and pampering their Bodies too much with Meat and Drink; by entertaining idle Thoughts, and vain Imaginations, in their Hearts; and by letting their Eyes luſt after evil Things; and by defiling their Ears with trifling Songs, and Ballads of Vanity, and Wantonneſs; and by giving their Tongues to filthy Communications, and to frothy, and fooliſh Talking, and Jeſting; and by letting their Feet run to Riots, and Revellings, and Balls, and Maſquerades, and Stage-Plays, and ſuch like Incitements, and Provocations to Vice, and Prophaneneſs; and, in ſhort, thro' their whole Converſation leading a diſorderly Courſe of Life: It is no Wonder, I ſay, if ſuch People as theſe, that run themſelves into ſuch Temptations, do often fall into the fooliſh, and hurtful Luſts

Luſts of Laſciviouſneſs; and that even Marriage itſelf is not a Curb, or a Cure for ſuch vain, diſorderly Perſons. SERM. VII.

But, on the contrary, all thoſe that are well diſpos'd, and very deſirous to be kept virtuous, and chaſte; their great Care and Concern is to live regularly, ſoberly, and temperately in all Things; and to keep themſelves, as much as they can, out of bad Company; and withal, to be diligent in their Buſineſs, and fervent in the Spirit, ſerving the Lord; by ſometimes meditating on good Things, and reading prudent and pious Books, eſpecially the Holy Scriptures; and by keeping the Commandments, and obſerving the holy Ordinances of God; and, above all, by committing themſelves, and their Ways unto the Lord; and truſting alſo in him, and praying unto him in Time of Temptation, and upon all other great Occaſions. And thus ſhould we all do; we ſhould all of us walk circumſpectly in all our Ways; that we may not only flee all youthful Luſts; but that, by the Aſſiſtance of God's Grace and Holy Spirit, we may be preſerv'd pure, and blameleſs unto

SERM. VII. unto our Lives End; and ſo, may be fit to appear hereafter before the Judgment-Seat of God, and to be made happy for evermore. Amen. Amen.

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